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Go Dotty campaign

www.kentnews.co.uk June 15, 2014

Mid Edition No 612

NEWS »

Cracking down on drug dealers

We join the police on dramatic dawn raids

EVENTS »

Is airshow set to crash land?

Huge crowds but big losses at Folkestone event

HEALTH »

Fighting the flab: Tackling obesity

Should we follow French example to slim down?

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When the going gets tough, the tough take responsibility...

HAVING a sense of responsibility on both a personal level and of that within the micro and major societies in which we circulate should never be seen merely as an option but more a requirement.

It is, after all, too easy to turn your back and assume someone else's pain should not concern you, or that you are powerless to assist them.

The mark of a human being worth their salt is a sense of responsibility to step up and be counted when necessary, and perhaps more significantly, to actually make a difference to the world in which we find ourselves in. Responsibility lies within the heart and soul of us all.

Take the people who work at, or for, children's hospice Demelza. They do so to make a difference to people they may never meet but for whom they feel are worthy of supporting. And there's no denying the charity provides an



Editor **Chris Britcher**

essential service to members of the community in their greatest hour of need. No parent needs reminding of how they would feel should their child develop a life-limiting illness, and no-one should need reminding why charities are in need of your support right now more than ever.

We're supporting Demelza this week as part of its Go Dotty campaign – you can read more inside.

Of course, in the wider world, responsibility is something even the most powerful can shirk.

The US and UK governments should be asking themselves some tough questions as to their responsibility to the people of Iraq this weekend; and pondering the potentially high cost of inaction. It may be a distant land, but having opted to invade and then depart, we, as a nation, cannot select now to shirk our responsibility to the people of the troubled land.



PAGE
14 »



PAGE
12 »



PAGE
27 »



PAGE
47 »



PAGE
62 »

6

News

9 We join cops on drug raid

Operation Granite targets the dealers

11 GP failed all CQC's tests

Sittingbourne doctor's surgery failure shame

12 Childhood obesity

How to help our kids learn to eat properly

14 Lack of cash hits airshow

Future of Folkestone's free event is in doubt

19 Sticking with a tradition

Panini football albums part of the World Cup

27 'Positive and inspiring'

Behind the scenes at Demelza hospice

The Arts

33 Thanet on their mind

Couple behind new magazine for area

Food & Drink

39 Restaurants

Review of Cafe du Soleil in Canterbury



PAGE
31 »

Homes & Gardens

47 Latest news and features

What's best indoors and outdoors this month

Sport

62 Getting into the swing

Your chance to have a go at the game of golf

Plus

Seven days Pages 5-7

Feedback Page 42

Images of Kent Page 43

Motors Page 57

Appointments Page 60

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Major £85m shops plan is ditched by councillors

By Chris Murphy

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A SCHEME to build a multi-million-pound shopping complex on the outskirts of Maidstone, which would have boasted a Waitrose and Debenhams store, has been thrown out by council chiefs.

The plans for the Newnham Court site – currently occupied by Notcutts just off junction seven of the M20 – would have seen an investment of £85 million, with some 17 other stores built on an expanded site and some 1,500 jobs created.

But it was fiercely criticised by many, who pointed at it delivering a huge blow to the traditional town centre. Other concerns revolved around increased traffic and the environmental impact.

Expansion of a nearby medical centre on the back of the plans would, it is claimed, have created a further 2,500 positions.

But when the proposal was put before Maidstone Borough Council on Thursday night, it was rejected.

Lester Hampson of developer Land Securities said he was bitterly disappointed at the decision.

He told KoS: "This is a lost



PROPOSAL: Aerial views of the planned development for the Newnham Court site, close to the M20 junction

opportunity for Maidstone.

Together with the medical campus project on adjoining land, our two schemes would have created around 4,000 new jobs for the county town, but councillors have turned their backs on that. That is a great shame.

"We will now take time to consider our options before making any final decisions."

He refused to rule out an appeal.

The council's planning committee agreed with its officers,

who recommended refusing the plans, and rejected it eight votes to three on the grounds of impact on business and the environment.

Objections came from all directions, including the parish councils at Boxley and Detling, and even Medway Council was concerned about the effect it would have on its own high streets.

The planning officers said Land Securities had not followed the government advice for what is called a sequential test, where

town centres are properly examined for development before more rural locations.

As part of the plans, the existing site would have been flattened and extended into neighbouring land to provide a retail hub.

The medical campus is spearheaded by private hospital the Kent Institute of Medicine and Surgery. It says failure to win permission may see it look at other sites instead, possibly at Ashford or Kings Hill.

Decision to close beds at Pilgrims Hospice set for review after backlash

THE Pilgrims Hospice is reviewing its bed closure plans at its Canterbury site due to an increasingly hostile reaction from fund-raisers and supporters.

The hospice runs three centres across east Kent – in Ashford, Margate and the cathedral city.

But it sparked fury when it announced plans to close inpatient beds in Canterbury by 2016 and instead focus on in-home care.

At a meeting in the city earlier this month, hundreds of those attending stood up and left as a mark of protest.

Now, this week, public meetings in Margate and Ashford have been cancelled.

The chairman of the board of trustees, Dr Richard Morey, said: "We are becoming painfully aware of how our incredibly loyal supporters feel about the 'Future Hospice' programme and we want them all to know that we are revisiting the proposed programme with a view to finding solutions to the problems that we are facing.

"We have been reading letters full of heartfelt concern from our supporters and we have been alerted to the Facebook campaign and petition, all of which have prompted us to take immediate action.

"We acknowledge that we have not communicated sufficiently to date and will be rectifying this by communicating to our supporting community more regularly through the local media and also through Facebook."

Trustee Sarah Andrews added: "I was extremely concerned at the depth of public feeling I witnessed at the meeting.

"We are taking this very seriously indeed. We must listen to our supporting community and that is the right way forward."

Officials at the hospice organisation held talks on Thursday night, behind closed doors, to discuss what it should do in light of the review.

However, on Friday, there was no word on the outcome of the meetings. See www.kentnews.co.uk for updates.

Fears of domestic abuse rise during the Brazil World Cup

WHILE the majority of people will be following England's fortunes and enjoying the colour and spectacle of the Brazil World Cup peacefully, police say they will crack down hard on anyone causing trouble.

Among a host of measures, it has launched a domestic abuse campaign to ensure victims know what help is available. Traditionally, the rates of offending rise during

major football tournaments.

Detective Chief Inspector Andy Pritchard, who leads Kent Police's domestic abuse team, said: "We want victims to understand that, whoever they are, they are not alone. There are lots of organisations and charities who support victims and we work very closely with all of them."

For advice, see www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk.

Boy racers to be targeted in latest police dispersal zone

TWO more dispersal zones have been deployed in Medway in a bid to tackle noisy boy racers.

The areas are in Hoo and around the Medway City Estate. Both zones will last for six months and give police the power to move on groups of two or more people found to be "causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress".

Between 9pm and 6am,

under-16s who are not with an adult can also be taken back to their homes – and could in theory be jailed for three months or fined £2,500 if they refuse.

Acting Chief Inspector Joy Dean said: "They will allow officers to deal with the minority of people who cause a nuisance in the area. Anyone found acting in an antisocial manner will be asked to move on."



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Thousands ready to cash in on crossing saving

MORE than 9,000 motorists are poised to open accounts for the new free-flowing Dartford tolls when they go live later this year.

The Highways Agency says thousands have signed up already for regular email updates about how to take advantage of discounted toll costs when the new system activates in October.

Designed to reduce congestion at the crossing,

cameras will instead identify every car travelling through the tunnel, with motorists having to pay either online, via text or in selected retailers within 24 hours of using the route.

An agency spokesman told us: "There will be discounts available, similar to the existing Dart Tag customers, where under the current prices of £2 cash, it is reduced to £1.33."



AT HER DESK: Margate's Kerry Boyd

White horse statue looks set to fall as £12m hurdle proves too high to leap

By Chris Murphy

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A £12 MILLION shortfall in funding means an ambitious statue, designed to rival that of the Angel of the North, has all but been scrapped.

Unveiled in 2009, the Mark Wallinger-designed white horse was due to have been built at Ebbsfleet and become a powerful symbol of the county.

But times have changed since then and with budget cuts across the nation, spending that sort of money on a 50m-tall statue – as tall as Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square – has proved nigh-on impossible to justify.

One of the structure's former supporters was Gareth Johnson, MP for Dartford, who now realises the project needs to be reviewed.

Conservative MP Mr Johnson said: "The combination of escalating costs associated with it and the recession which hit at the same time is what I believe to be the main rea-



DOOMED? The 50m-high statue

son behind why it hasn't been built.

"We will have to wait to see if in the future it can become a viable project again."

It's understood Turner Prize-winning artist Mr Wallinger still wants

to push ahead and have the enormous horse placed next to the A2.

Previously, he said: "It just takes time. Various hurdles come along and we have to keep plugging away, but I think we will get there."

The owner of much of the land in the Ebbsfleet area is a company called Land Securities.

A spokesman there said: "At the moment, there isn't funding for it. If someone comes up with the money, then it can certainly be considered."

"Back in 2009, we funded a feasibility study, but it is now down to the artist to come up with the money to build it.

"We put a lot of money in to public art and we have a large horse at our new shopping centre in Leeds.

"It seems the lack of money is a sign of the times.

"If further down the road things change then it will be looked at again.

"It has got to be right for the times – it is a pretty fair sign that the money has not been forthcoming."

The popular Angel of the North is in Gateshead.

Youth crime tsar 'working as normal'

YOUTH police and crime commissioner Kerry Boyd, 20, remains at her desk and is under no form of investigation, Ann Barnes's office confirmed this week.

It follows national newspaper revelations about a 'close relationship' with a married 50-year-old former county councillor.

But amid whispers Miss Boyd, from Margate, had been suspended from the £15,000 one-year role, Police and Crime Commissioner Mrs Barnes's staff denied there had been any such decision.

A spokesman for Mrs Barnes said: "Kerry was never off duty.

"What she isn't doing yet is public engagements. She has got some work to do in the office anyway, so while we support her through her personal issues that's what she's doing at the moment.

"There are things she can work on fortunately in the office, to do with websites, on how best to engage with the youth through their most popular medium which is digital, social media.

"She always had it in her mind that she was going to do this and when she feels ready, she will go back to public engagements."

Mrs Barnes, still reeling from criticism over a recent Channel 4 documentary, has refused to discuss the recent Kerry Boyd issues.

Street name honour for pioneering Tull

WALTER Tull, the pioneering footballer and Army officer, is to be honoured by having a new road named after him.

Mr Tull is known as the first black Army officer in the British Army as well as the first black footballer to play in the English top division when he signed for Tottenham Hotspur in 1908.

Tragically, however, he was killed in action in 1918, during the First World War.

Born in Folkestone, Shepway District Council is now to name a road in the east of the town Walter Tull Way, close to where the joiner's son was born and brought up.

Shepway council leader David Monk said: "We are recalling the centenary of the First World War this year, and Folkestone has so many connections with the conflict, so it is very fitting to remember Walter in this way."

The new road, off Shepway Close, will be home to a development of new homes and flats and will open in July.

Rare beetle is found on nature reserve

AN ENDANGERED beetle feared to be in sharp decline across the UK has been found on a new nature reserve on Sheppey.

The black oil beetle has come under threat due to changes in countryside management.

But the RSPB says it has found the species on its new Great Bells reserve.

It lives close to the nest of solitary bees. The beetle larvae climb on to the bees' backs, allowing them to feed on pollen and nectar in the nest before leaving when fully grown.

Site manager Julian Nash said: "We're really excited by this. They are a barometer of the health of the countryside, so it is really encouraging for us to find one at this new reserve."

The shiny black insect, which is more than 2.5cm in size, is one of five species of oil beetle in the UK. It lives on wildflower-rich grassland, with adults feeding on the leaves and petals.

There is currently no public access to Great Bells, although this will change in the future.

Wait goes on for third Thames crossing site

TRANSPORT chiefs admit they still don't know when a decision on the site of a third Thames crossing is to be made.

More than 5,700 people responded to a consultation into plans to build a new crossing, either alongside the existing Dartford Crossing or to the east of Gravesend.

There is strong local opposition to both.

A third option – to use land in Swanscombe – was ruled out for fear it would derail plans for the multi-billion-pound Paramount theme park proposed for the area.

A Department for Transport spokesman said: "We are committed to making a decision on the location of the new crossing as soon as possible.

"We recognise that, whichever location is chosen, it will have a significant impact on local people and the economy. This is a tough decision and must not be taken lightly.

"There is no date at the moment as to when a decision will be made."

agenda

What will make next week's headlines...

Dig deep for Demelza in fund-raising week

CHILDREN's hospice Demelza will spend the week hosting a series of special fund-raising events across the county as part of its annual Go Dotty campaign.

Running until Friday, June 20, it is staged to coincide with national Children's Hospice Week.

Demelza, based in Bobbing near Sittingbourne, needs some

£9 million a year to support its services. All of the money comes from donations from individuals and businesses.

It provides support and care for youngsters with life-limiting conditions – and offers a range of services for the wider family.

Kent on Sunday is supporting the Go Dotty campaign and to mark the



occasion we have turned the masthead on our front cover 'dotty'.

For full details of the event, see our special coverage inside today's issue. To donate and for more information: www.demelza.org.uk.

Bidders begin to chase 35-year Dreamland deal

OPERATORS interested in running the Dreamland Heritage Amusement Park will spend the week preparing their submissions after the process to recruit a suitable firm was started by Thanet District Council.

The brief is to run the much-anticipated park as a "successful, sustainable and

viable business".

A tender process has now begun, with the successful candidate handed a 35-year contract.

Leader of the council Iris Johnston said: "I'm delighted plans for the site are progressing as scheduled to develop this exciting new amusement park." The process ends on July 25.

...also

More fire strikes due

NEGOTIATIONS will continue this week in a bid to prevent yet more strike action from firefighters.

A 24-hour strike ran from 9am on Thursday – with a further seven-hour walk-out planned for next Saturday, June 21.

The row revolves around pensions.

Taxi consultation ending

A CONSULTATION into changes to taxi driver conditions in Dartford concludes on Thursday.

Views are sought by the borough council on raising the minimum time from holding a licence from 12 months to 36 months for all Hackney Carriage and private cabs.

Fishing line warning

ANGLERS are being warned to take extra care near power lines as the coarse fishing season gets under way on Monday.

UK Power Networks, which runs power lines across Kent, is issuing warnings amid fears of increasingly long modern carbon-fibre fishing poles catching overhead lines.

Primark store goes live

PRIMARK opens the doors to its newest store in the county on Thursday.

Canterbury will be home to the latest branch of the discount fashion retailer.

The store is situated at the site of the vacated BHS building close to the Whitefriars shopping complex.

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Operation Granite rocks the county's drug dealer network

ORGANISED crime was sent a strong message this week, after a series of co-ordinated dawn drug raids resulted in 24 arrests.

All were linked to suspected Class A drugs.

They followed more than a year of police investigations and were carried out across the west of the county.

Areas which saw police strike included a number of addresses in and around Tunbridge Wells, Edenbridge, Maidstone and Gravesend.

More than 200 officers were involved in the raids as part of what was dubbed Operation Granite.

Some 17 properties were hit simultaneously at 7am on Tuesday, and a further 12 on Wednesday resulting in a further seven arrests.

Deputy Chief Constable of Kent Police, Paul Brandon, speaking after the first raids: "There's been a sophisticated level of intelligence gathering and then obviously the investigation on the back of that intelligence, and that's led to 17 addresses where warrants have been executed.

"We were looking particularly for 15 people who we believe to have been committing offences with Class A drugs, which we believe were destined for the county and probably further afield, and we took 14 of those people into custody.

"Obviously finding those people, and securing their arrests was the key aim, but alongside that we have

Kent Police's ongoing war on crime continued this week with a 200-strong dawn swoop on 17 properties that netted 24 arrests, reports **Maria Chiorando...**



GRANITE: Police raided 17 properties around Kent and made 24 arrests

recovered some jewellery, cash, some vehicles and importantly, an imitation firearm. The searches are on going."

In total, 29 properties, which included residential and business premises, were searched.

Chief Inspector Dave Pate, district commander for Tunbridge Wells, was pleased with the outcome of the operation. He oversaw raids in Pem-

bury, Southborough and Rusthall.

He said: "My message is we're here to commit to fighting the organised crime element dealing in drugs across the county.

"This week is the culmination of a long operation and the results so far are very promising.

"We're very confident we can bring people before the court and bring them to justice. This is a great result.

"I hope the people of Tunbridge Wells see this as a great success, and evidence that the police are working with partners to tackle these organised gangs.

"To the criminals I would say don't come to Tunbridge Wells, don't come to Kent, don't offend.

"If you do, we will be relentless. We will keep coming after you. This is just the start."

A police spokesman added that the effects of these arrests would be felt immediately, as the drugs the alleged dealers were selling would have been earmarked for the streets of the county.

Investigations surrounding the organised crime element started many months ago.

Explained Mr Brandon: "There are a number of technical capabilities we have at our disposal with the serious crime directorate, and we have used every asset we have in order to gather intelligence for the investigation, and from that we have identified the people we believe are involved in these criminal activities."

At the time of going press, tests were on-going as to the type or purity of drugs founds during the raid. However, the police say they believe them to be Class A substances.

Mr Brandon added: "Kent is a very safe place. That is a fact.

"We accept that there are levels of crime, and drugs can be a driver of certain types of crime and we don't want drugs on the streets of Kent.

"If people conspire to sell drugs we will target those people, disrupt them, arrest them, and put them before the courts."

POLICE RAIDS: WE EXPERIENCE THE THRILL OF THE CHASE...

REPORTER Maria Chiorando joined police officers on one of Tuesday morning's co-ordinated raids. She explains what the experience was like:

IT'S 5.30am in Dartford; when dawn slips into day. The streets are quiet as one of the county's key towns rouses itself from its slumber and prepares for all that lies ahead.

I'm at the North Kent Police Station, and there's an almost eerie calm in the briefing room. Nearly 200 police officers are gathered to receive their final instructions before carrying out the dawn raids designed to strike a blow to drugs dealer networks in the county.

The palpable sense of focus was necessary; there's an awful lot of hard work which proceeds this dramatic day of action.

These raids are the result of investigations lasting over a year, and intelligence gathering that had been happening for even longer. The stakes could not be higher.

Large quantities of specialist equipment, battering rams and padding are loaded into vans. Each team is tasked with targeting an address and briefed on who they can expect to find.

Amid a mounting hum of commuter traffic, the police vans take to the road – splintering as they head off to their intended targets.

Kent on Sunday was invited to join them – travelling down through west Kent to Tunbridge Wells. Dartford's urban sprawl soon replaced by the leafy green spaces and well



manicured lawns of the royal spa town.

It would be too easy to assume wealthy west Kent doesn't harbour those involved in the shady world of drugs, to buy into the area's stereotype.

The reality, of course, is different. After all, where better, one could argue, than in an area where disposable income is perhaps highest.

We arrive a while before the raid is due to commence – co-ordinated to take place at the same time as the others. We park some distance from the house. Then we waited.

And while we waited the police made it clear we were not in any way to interfere with the

action. Stay behind the police, we are told. Do not enter the house and, perhaps most obviously, do not get in the way.

The countdown began.

The plan was to batter down the door, as quickly as possible.

"We're going to do it so fast," one of the officers had teased, "that way you won't be able to get a picture."

When the call came, we sprang into action. The adrenaline pumping.

Following the police, we ran along the road, tension growing with every step.

It appeared the jungle drums had never been beaten so swiftly. Within seconds of our arrival, a man and woman showed up, telling the officers there was a child in the house.

The news saw the battering ram lowered and less invasive action deployed instead. The police knocked on the door, coaxing the woman inside to open it.

Once in, it was not long before they emerged with the suspect.

It may have not been quite such a dramatic entrance as we expected, but the sight of the individual being lead out in handcuffs, flanked by officers, proves a fitting end.

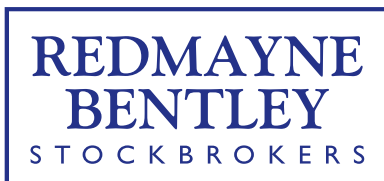
As he hides himself beneath his hood, he is led to a waiting car and whisked off for questioning.

The other officers had plenty of work to do, however. They spent the rest of the morning giving a thorough search of the house and car.

The police's work, it seems, is never done.

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'Shocking' failings at surgery yet GP allowed to stay in post

A DOCTOR could be suspended after a damning report which found he was providing inadequate care in virtually every possible way.

Inspectors who surprised Bijan Saha at his surgery in Sittingbourne uncovered a staggering catalogue of malpractice, including incorrect prescriptions, poor hygiene, lack of confidentiality and unsafe storage of medicines.

In one incident, he prescribed insulin to a patient who was not diabetic.

Other patients said the doctor had given them a prescription before they even finished explaining what their symptoms were, while there was also an occasion he took a call on his mobile phone during a consultation.

It was the first time in the five-year history of the Care Quality Commission, which regulates GPs, that a doctor had failed all 11 of their assessment categories.

Remarkably, however, the surgery remains open and Dr Saha is allowed to continue working – despite the General Medical Council on Thursday imposing a number of conditions on him prior to further investigations.

During their five-hour visit, inspectors found that Dr Saha, 73, who runs the Lakeside Medical Centre in Todd Crescent, did not provide "safe and appropriate care", did not protect pa-

General Medical Council impose restrictions on GP after Care Quality Commission report reveals surgery failed on all 11 of its assessment categories. **Sarah Linney** investigates...

tients adequately from the risk of infection and did not administer medicines safely.

Staff were found to be underqualified and those who chaperoned patients during examinations may not have undergone criminal record checks, the inspectors said.

Medicines were being stored and handled incorrectly, with patients being given medication that had not been prescribed for them and medicines stored past their expiry date.

The report said: "The refrigerators containing medicines were not kept locked. In one examination room we found medicines which were stored on the top of an open dressing trolley and were accessible to people in the examination room.

"Some of these were prescribed for named patients but were being administered to others. Repeat prescriptions were supplied without a review of the person's condition."

The surgery's untidy and sometimes not very clean state put patients' health at further risk.

"The consultation room was disorderly and untidy and there was a risk that treatments could not be conducted appropriately, due to the lack of space around the examination couch.

Couches were dusty on the lower bars and some medical items were dusty, and in one consultation room we found the disposable couch roll had not been changed after a consultation.

"The waiting room chairs were badly stained with an unknown substance.

"Effective cleaning procedures were not in place and the premises were not maintained appropriately in order to facilitate effective cleaning."

When the inspectors asked about infection control procedures they were told that there were "no policies in place".

It added: "In two of the three clinical rooms, clinical waste bins were not available. Sharps bins were not being used appropriately as they contained medicines."

Patient confidentiality was not always respected, with one patient reporting that reception staff were sometimes called in during consulta-

tions to speak to the doctor about other patients.

"People's medical records were not accurate or held securely," the report added. "In the consultation room, we saw printed prescriptions stored in a letter holder, which were visible to people in the consultation chairs."

The inspectors said that some of the practice staff were underqualified in terms of both skills and experience and that staff had "not been recruited in an appropriate manner".

"Staff told us they had not been required to have a criminal record check, sign a statement in regard to the Rehabilitation of Offenders' Act, complete a health questionnaire to show they were medically fit to carry out their tasks, or prove their identity or that they were eligible to be employed in the UK," the report said.

"Staff confirmed that they had not been given job descriptions, letters of offer or contracts."

Additionally, there was no complaints procedure at the practice.

The Care Quality Commission confirmed it had referred the case to the

General Medical Council, which has the ability to take action against Dr Saha.

Katherine Murphy, chief executive of the Patients' Association, said: "These findings are shocking. This is completely unacceptable. The practice concerned has shown absolutely no regard to the need for confidentiality, safety, dignity and respect when dealing with a patient. We urge that a strict penalty is imposed."

A spokesperson for NHS England in Kent and Medway said: "All GP practices must provide safe, high quality care to their patients and meet all essential standards at their surgeries."

"We will not accept the provision of care which falls short of these standards and continue to work with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to ensure that local services are providing the appropriate care to patients."

"Dr Saha and other local GPs have written to us to confirm their intention to enter into a partnership arrangement that will provide new clinical leadership for the practice. We are now reviewing the CQC report and will take any further action necessary to ensure all patients at the Lakeside Medical Centre receive the high standard of care they deserve."

Mr Saha was unavailable for comment. On Thursday the GMC placed restrictions on him. Local health authorities say they are keeping him under 'close supervision'.

Science park motorway junction scheme is back as council chief denies housing plans

LONG discussed plans for a new junction off the M2 to provide access to the Kent Science Park are back on the table.

Supporters of the £20 million junction 5a, which would provide a direct link from the motorway to the 500,000 square foot industrial complex, say it is crucial to bring jobs and growth to the area.

But opponents are worried that it will do little to ease traffic on the rural roads and will inevitably have to be paid for by concreting over swathes of countryside for housing.

Swale council leader Andrew Bowles categorically denied any plans existed for housing as part of the scheme, and estimated that the junction would reduce the traffic on the country lanes by three quarters.

He explained: "This would improve the quality of life of the people of Swale. It would increase employment, economic activity and money coming into the borough."

"There will be real gains for people living in the rural areas around

Sittingbourne. The rural roads are used as a bit of a rat run. People either drive through Sittingbourne and go through the country lanes to get to the science park or they turn off the motorway at junction five and go immediately onto the country lanes.

"Some traffic modelling [where experts predict how a new road will affect traffic flows] has been done and more needs to be done, but on most of the local roads it showed a reduction in traffic. There were conflicting views on what effect it would have on traffic on the motorway."

According to Cllr Bowles, roughly half the funding would come from central government, with the rest being provided by the science park.

But he gave a cast iron guarantee it would not be paid for by bulldozing countryside to build homes.

"There is no possibility of any housing being constructed to fund this scheme," he said.

However, Andy Hudson, a member of the Five Parishes Opposition Group, which opposes the expansion of the

science park, said he did not think traffic on the rural roads would ease.

The junction would only be on the coastbound carriageway, meaning to get onto the Londonbound carriageway drivers would either have to go down to junction six at Faversham and turn round, or still go to junction five through Sittingbourne and the villages.

He said: "Science park employees will inevitably end up using the rural network. It's a silly idea. When this was first proposed by the science park, the plans included houses: first 10,000, then 5,000, to fund the road."

"To build housing over the countryside would be hugely unpopular."

However, Cllr Bowles said the junction was essential if Sittingbourne was to prosper. He concluded: "We have an opportunity here to increase economic activity and prosperity within Swale and the Thames Gateway villages and benefit people living in the villages around Sittingbourne. I think we should all get behind it."



UP THE JUNCTION: Council leader Andrew Bowles is backing the plan

Is education key to victory in the battle of the bulge?

A GP has called on the Government to follow in the footsteps of our continental counterparts and introduce 'food appreciation' classes at schools.

Dr Julian Spinks, who works at a practice in Strood, says a change in the way we approach education could be the most effective tool yet in tackling the mounting problem of childhood obesity.

It comes in a week when headlines were generated following a report in the British Medical Journal which highlighted an alarming rise in the number of cases of type two diabetes.

One of the main causes is being overweight.

And with an estimated one in five children emerging from primary school classified as 'obese' there are concerns of a ticking health time bomb.

Explains Dr Spinks: "I think part of the problem is that we have, I believe, two generations of people who don't know how to cook and don't know about food."

"The key is in education; both families and in schools. I was struck by how, in France, they have food appreciation classes."

"I believe this opens children up to experience many types of cuisine, and expanding their palates beyond fast food."

It is a view shared by nutritional therapist Maria Zaretti, from Canterbury.

She added: "It's different to working with adults, because an adult can make a more rational decision, but with children very often you are working with slightly fussier eaters and need to work around this."

"I would start by looking at the current diet and lifestyle, and try and implement simple personalised changes that will bring the biggest benefit."

"The focus should always be on whole foods, and portion control. This amounts to looking at the quantities and types of food, which is not rocket science."

"We need to work with parents to encourage children to try the healthier foods, and to eat a range of foods across a balanced diet."

The role of parents in the equation is significant.

Just last week, two parents in Norfolk were arrested amid accusations of abuse after their son ballooned to 15-stone.

He is just 5ft 1in tall and only 11-years-old.

The probe continues, and the arrests only came after a number of other intervention methods failed, but it once again catapulted the issues of children's health into the headlines.

Child obesity figures in this county are in line with the national upward trend.

Luke Bicknell is a former primary school teacher who now runs community gyms to promote a healthier lifestyle, in Bridge, near Canterbury.

One GP is convinced taking the fight to the classroom is vital in the war against rise of obesity. **Maria Chiorando** reports



LACK OF KNOWLEDGE: Calls are being made to improve children's nutritional education and (inset) Luke Bicknell

MEDWAY OBESITY SUMMIT



ONE of the leaders of Medway's first obesity summit has said he is optimistic about some of the 'wacky' and 'innovative' ideas raised at the meeting this week.

Following reports that nearly one third of Medway's adults are obese, the summit, held earlier this month, was called to try and tackling the growing problem.

The meeting was led by Andrew Mackness, chairman of Medway's health and wellbeing board, and David Brake, the council's portfolio holder for adult services.

Its aim was to come up with strategies to try and solve the issue, and to do this, specialists in the fields of health, food, education and sports came together.

The session, which took place in Gillingham, was, according to Cllr Mackness, a 'great success.'

He explained: "There were lots of ideas, lots of engagement. It was the start of a long journey to solve the problem across the UK, we in Medway could be leaders in this."

"Our obesity figures are in line with the national

average – there has been some exaggeration blowing them out of proportion. It is still an issue that needs to be solved though. The issue for me is that this obesity issue costs over £75 million a year."

He added: "People were encouraged to think out of the box, which they did. The ideas ranged between health, and environment, among other sectors. There were lots of wacky and innovative ideas."

"Education is another key factor. We have lots of people who do not know how to cook well, and do not know how to eat well. We now have to look over everything that was discussed and look at our options."

Should parents be banned from parking near their children's school to encourage more walking was one of the proposals – put forward by Medway councillor Mike O'Brien.

Turn inside this week's paper for a special look at his proposal, his thinking behind it, and those who say it would prove unworkable.

He said: "In a survey taken in 2013, almost a third of 10 to 11-year-olds in England were classed as overweight or obese. That's nearly triple what it was when measurements started being taken in the 1980s."

Dr Spinks adds: "There is an idea that having extremely overweight children is as bad as starving them."

"It's very difficult, but I don't believe in legislating. I think it's much more effective to persuade people to change their habits."

"It's true that it is a growing problem. When I started practising 20 years ago, I would see an occasional case of childhood obesity. Now it's a much larger proportion."

It is a complex issue with no golden bullet solution, the answer perhaps lies in looking at the root causes of the obesity problem.

Nutritional expert Maria Zaretti adds: "There is a large dietary and lifestyle component."

"Preventative measures are better than cure, but looking at the principles of healthy, balanced eating, as well as exercise, is the way forward for prevention, as well as when losing weight."

"Nowadays, we go into supermarkets, and are overwhelmed by choices, that won't always be the best ones for us."

"We're very out of touch with where our food comes from, and this creates a disconnect."

And it's not just children who are piling on the weight.

Mr Bicknell explains: "The rate of obesity in adults has risen in a fairly similar way to children over the last 30 years."

"This suggests that our lifestyle changes in the last 30 years have had a dramatic impact on our weight."

"And what are the two biggest changes to our lifestyle in the last 30 years? The rise of the supermarkets and the technological revolution."

"These are the two main factors to blame, in my opinion."

There is also the additional complication of resistance when parents are told their child is obese, which is something Dr Spinks has come across.

"They think that it is criticism, but it's not," he says. "There is no point being judgemental. It's about helping parents to feed their children, rather than criticise them."

"The solution," insists Mr Bicknell, "is simple. Families must take responsibility and give up the excuses."

"I believe if families bought and cooked fresh food from scratch, which doesn't have to be expensive, and were as active as possible, ditching the daily three hour combined TV and Xbox habit, we could reverse the epidemic rapidly."

What do you think? Join the debate and share your views. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford TN25 6SS. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk



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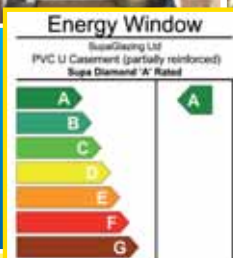
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Dark clouds over as organisers say



IT PULLED in a remarkable 190,000 people, but the future of the Folkestone Airshow remains far from certain due to financial concerns.

Organisers say that, although the event was a great success, they did not generate sufficient revenues through car-parking, programmes or other donations.

The free event saw a host of aerial displays – including the Red Arrows – take place over a weekend blessed with predominantly good weather.

Those behind the event admit there were some logistical problems and that it looks likely to have made a loss, which, in turn, will threaten its return.

Organiser Yvonne Holder told KoS this week: “People have been telling us there were not enough buckets going round for them to contribute to the cost of putting on the show and it was too hard to find someone selling the programmes.

“We also had to pay for land to provide 7,500 car-parking spaces and these were not utilised.

“Some of the comments coming back say this was because of the price and directions, but we have still had to pay for the use of all that land.

“The parking was to have paid for the traffic management needed and security – anything that was left over was to have gone in to the coffers for next year.

“But there was nothing, so that is disappointing, especially as we were trying to pre-sell it before the event.”

Aircraft fans were asked to use a park-and-ride system from Folkestone Racecourse and Radnor Park.

Mrs Holder said: “We didn’t have the number of volunteers – we needed so many more than we had.

“The people who did donate were very, very generous. They can still do it now on our website and that would help us out enormously.

“We have had donations since the weekend, which is wonderful.”

But the poor finances, whatever was to blame, still means that next year’s show hangs on a wing and a prayer.

Mrs Holder added: “It is still too early to make that decision. If we get lots of money in soon, then things will look better. I won’t know for a couple of weeks yet.”

She said the airshow attracted record crowds

but her company Open Air Promotions Ltd needed time to “very carefully” evaluate its future.

She added: “We promised that Folkestone Airshow 2014 would be the biggest and best yet – and everyone agrees that we delivered two days of aerial spectacle and ground events magnificently.

“But, sadly, income did not match the high costs of staging this quality event and at the same provide – as was planned – a sound financial platform for future shows.

“As a consequence, we are considering very carefully whether a show on this year’s scale and based on sponsorships, donations and public generosity is viable. It may be some time before decisions can be made.

“But let’s not take anything away from the fact that the show attracted and gave pleasure to scores of thousands of visitors and residents. The many, many messages of thanks we are receiving is evidence of that. We reckon that attendance was in the region of 190,000, with consequent benefits for shops, restaurants, bars, accommodation and entertainment-providers.

“We thank everyone who helped to make it such a wonderful weekend – people behind the scenes as well as those who spectators saw in action. Even the weather played fair.”

One of this year’s main sponsors was local firm Saga. When contacted this week, a spokesman said: “We are always happy to talk with lots of people. We always listen, but there is no blank cheque.”

The leader of Shepway District Council, David Monk, said: “Anyone who attended the airshow last weekend would confirm it was a fantastic event and a good opportunity for the town of Folkestone to impress visitors.

“It is of course very disappointing for this year’s organisers if they feel that they cannot run another event next year – but someone else may look at this and be able to make it more commercially successful.”

The event is a major draw to the town, which missed out last year when once again a shortfall in money led to problems.

Mrs Holder concluded: “If people and businesses want to see an airshow next year, they can put their hands in their pockets this year and donate on our website.”

To donate, visit www.folkestoneairshow.com.

airshow's future they face losses



Almost 190,000 people enjoyed Folkestone's free aerial event but they might have to give some cash if they want to see it return, writes **Chris Murphy**

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SHOW STARS: The Red Arrows were among the attractions at this year's Folkestone Airshow



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A disaster just waiting to happen?

Louise Barton, chairwoman of Lydd Airport Action Group, highlights the risk she says should not be overlooked in allowing the airfield to expand – that of its location next door to a nuclear power plant...

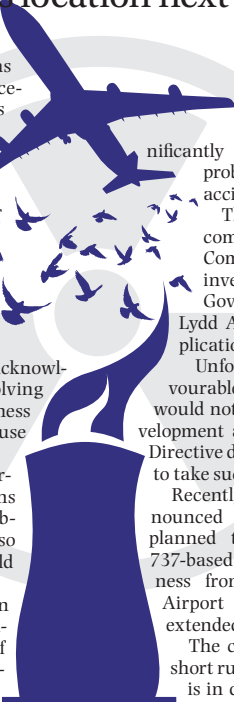


LIFE has been kind to Lydd Airport lately. Manston Airport closed and Lydd is now free to expand, assuming no further appeals against the Government's decision to approve its development. But for residents of Romney Marsh it is a different story: they face additional noise, pollution and urbanisation. There is also wider concern: this development is dangerous. The introduction of large aircraft such as Boeing 737s to Lydd will increase the probability of an aircraft accident at the nearby Dungeness nuclear power plant to unacceptable levels. The site is less than 60 seconds' flying time away. Other factors include the area's renowned large populations of birds, increasing the chance of bird-strike. Indeed, the airport and the nuclear site are separated by one of the RSPB's largest bird reserves and located under one of the main migratory bird routes in the south of England. The extensive restricted airspace in the airport's immediate vicinity

means the airport also has non-standard flight procedures; for example, Lydd is the only civil airport in the UK with a five-degree offset instrument landing system – raising the possibility of pilot error in the vicinity of a nuclear power station. This cocktail of problems is unique to Lydd Airport. The nuclear regulator acknowledges an accident involving large aircraft at the Dungeness nuclear complex would cause a serious incident. But it accepted Lydd Airport's development plans because it believed the probability of an accident was so small that effectively it could be ignored. Lydd Airport Action Group (LAAG) has demonstrated, via the work of successive independent experts, that the mathematical

ical model making this prediction is seriously flawed and significantly underestimates the probability of an aircraft accident. This robust evidence compelled the European Commission to launch an investigation into the Government's handling of Lydd Airport's planning application, which is ongoing. Unfortunately, even a favourable result for LAAG would not stop the airport's development as the Nuclear Safety Directive does not have the scope to take such action. Recently, Lydd Airport announced Newmarket Holidays planned to divert its Boeing 737-based package holiday business from Manston to Lydd Airport – before Lydd had extended its runway. The commercial use of the short runway by a Boeing 737 is in direct contradiction to

the claim that airport bosses made in their evidence to the 2011 public inquiry, which was that it could not operate 737s commercially on the existing short runway and therefore needed an extension. The point is reiterated on Lydd Airport's website. Yet an old Lithuanian-based 737 is now operating at the boundaries of its specification by flying to and from Lydd commercially on the existing runway – it was two-thirds full on June 1 and June 8. This adds to the flashpoints for a potential aircraft accident at the nuclear plant. **T**he causes and timing of a single accident are impossible to predict; who predicted the sinking of the Titanic? All one can say is that the situation is inherently unsafe. There are multiple contributing factors at Lydd that alone or in combination could cause untold damage. The public should be concerned and politicians ashamed.



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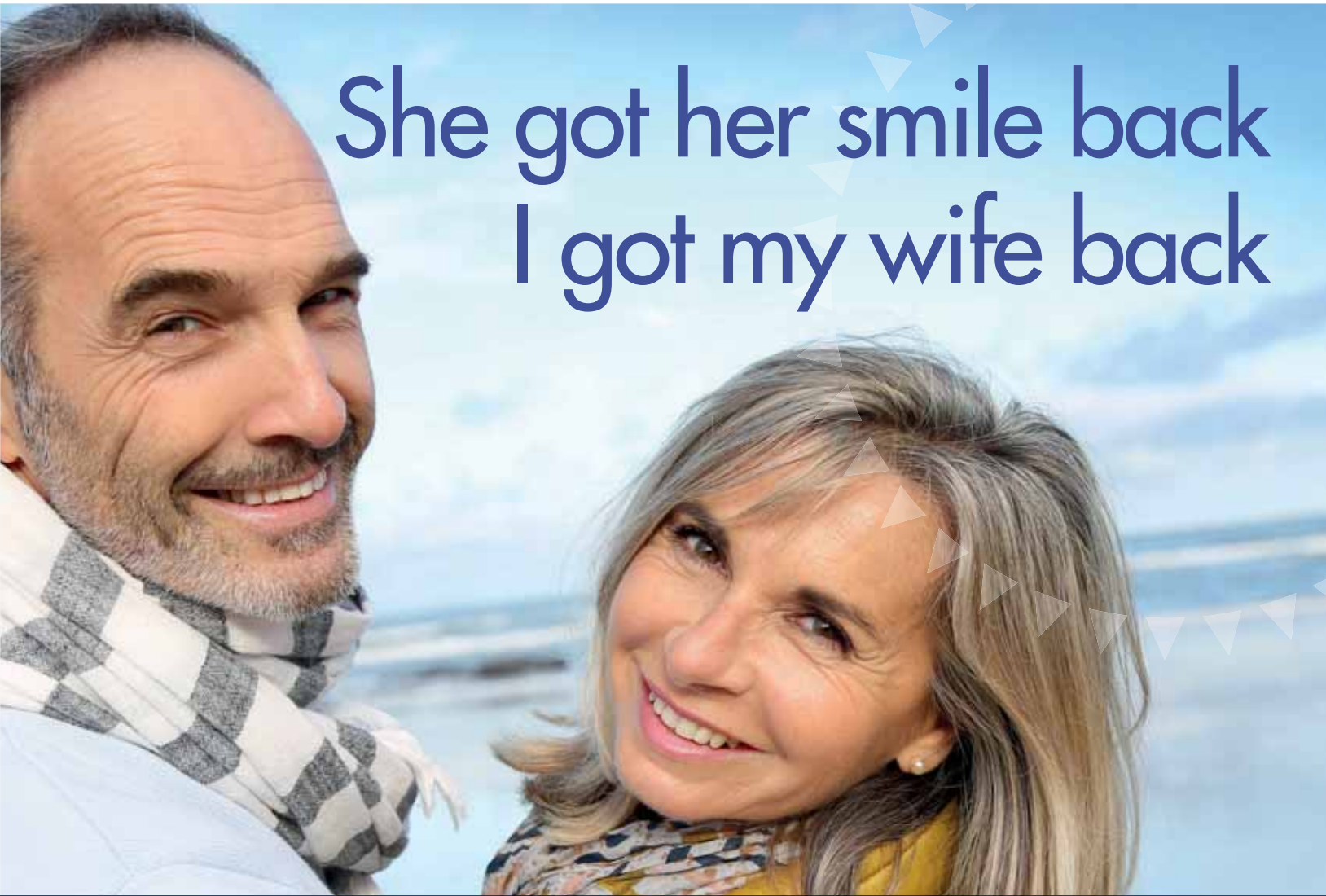
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WANTED MEN!: A whole new generation of football fans will be introduced to the pleasure, pain and expense of collecting stickers with this year's Fifa World Cup in Brazil. PICTURES: Keith Last

The addictive stickers that unite football fans both young and old

It's not just small boys but grown men who have fallen for the appeal of the world-famous Panini football albums. As Brazil 2014 kicks off

Caroline Read looks at the enduring appeal of the stickers and their link to the county...

WITH the Fifa World Cup now in full swing, for many the true excitement lies not on the slick moves of the world's finest football players, but on the subtle thrill of collecting Brazil 2014 stickers.

For children and adults alike the stickers, sold in packets of five, are an essential part of the ritual in the run-up to the biggest event in football.

For children they are fun, informative and engaging while, for what seems like a growing number of adults, they are a nostalgic blast from the past that connects millions of people from more than a hundred different countries.

The company behind the sticker albums is Panini, an Italian business based in Modena but with the UK branch of its operation based in a small, unassuming office building in the heart of Tunbridge Wells.

For many its name is synonymous with childhoods and a simpler time.

Panini was founded in 1961 by the Panini brothers, who had opened a news stand in Modena in 1945, and by 1954 had started the Panini Brothers Newspaper Distribution Office.

Since then it has published a diverse range of sticker collections: from football collections, to pop mu-

sic and TV series, along with Disney and popular toy brands such as Barbie and Action Man. Despite competition, it remains the world leader in the market.

Mexico 1970 saw Panini's first World Cup sticker album and ever since then fans have been addicted.

But in a rapidly changing world, what is it about these simple collectables that has seen record sales recently?

It seems this is one old-fashioned pastime that hasn't gone out of fashion – in fact, new technology has worked very much in its favour.

For the first time this year Panini provided a free computer app – the Panini Collectors App – designed to assist fans with monitoring the progress of their collections and assisting with swaps.

The app recognises stickers found, issues a checklist to help you organise what you need, and also provides links to social networks for swaps.

Swapping unwanted stickers for those you still need is no longer simply a case of taking a handful into school and discussing it in the playground. Panini has called social media 'the virtual playground'.

Keith Last, from Snodland, was a collector as a child but has recently become interested again, aged 44.

"The first Panini World Cup sticker

book I remember getting was the 1978 Argentina one," said Mr Last.

"I was only eight at the time and my mum only ever bought me the one pack of stickers, one of which I remember was Scotland legend Kenny Dalglish.

"Our family, apart from myself, aren't big football fans so I guess she just picked the book up on a whim and never thought to get any more stickers – but it left its mark on me."

Mr Last went on to get two or three Football League albums over the following years, this time along with the stickers, and it soon became an obsession.

"There's that thing blokes especially tend to have about collecting, be it stamps, train numbers, football programmes, old computer games.

"But as a mad keen football fan it was a way to get involved in the game, back in a time when you didn't get saturated by football coverage as kids today get, and feed that collecting bug.

"Plus you learnt about players you'd never heard of before."

Mr Last collected stickers for Panini's 1982 and 1986 World Cup albums but after that, having 'grown up', he stopped for a number of years.

"That was until the South Africa World Cup of 2010, when for some strange reason I suddenly got the

urge to start up again," he said.

"I don't know exactly why, partly nostalgia I guess, a return to childhood perhaps, but mainly because my nephew was four and I wanted to introduce him to the fun.

"And this time around I've just carried on doing so again, though I'm amazed to see I'm just one of millions of people in their 30s and 40s around the world all doing the same thing.

"I guess we all remember those happy days of childhood, the thrill of the chase to get those stickers you're after, and these days we have a bit more pocket money to actually buy enough packets to finally finish the albums off."

The changes the use of social media have made to the process of collecting and swapping are phenomenal.

Using the hashtag #GotGotNeed on Twitter, millions of Panini fans around the world can communicate. They show off photos of their albums, they tell people about any spares they might have and they ask if anyone has that elusive sticker that's been evading them going spare.

Mr Last is himself a Twitter and Facebook user.

He said: "Social media has changed collecting massively. Because we

PANINI: THE FACTS



- The first self-adhesive stickers were introduced in the 1971-72 Calciatori collection for Italian football.
- Originally, the stickers were made of light cardboard and collectors had to paste them into the album with glue.
- For a while at the end of the 1960s 'celline' – small double-sided adhesive triangles – were attached to the back of the stickers so that they could be stuck into the album without having to dig out the Pritt Stick.
- On average, Panini has produced one billion packs a year over the last few seasons – that's the equivalent of some

- six billion stickers.
- The standard price for a completed album of the first Panini collection is around £325. Some completed collections in excellent condition have changed hands for almost £650.
- Panini's Brazilian factory was doubled in capacity in readiness for World Cup requirements making it the world's second biggest facility. It is only outdone by their Italian production plant. They can produce 25 million packets of stickers a day; more than 750 million individual stickers a week.
- The company has to guess

the qualifying team players before the team managers announce them in order to get their product to market in good time.

- Despite what many collectors may think, stickers are printed in equal volumes. But some stickers become sought-after because collectors won't swap their duplicates. These will vary according to the territory, but in the UK in 1990 it was Paul Gascoigne and last World Cup it was Wayne Rooney.
- In the UK alone, Panini expects to sell enough World Cup stickers to go around the world, if lined up end to end.

« PAGE 19

aren't at school anymore you don't get half the playground going round with stacks of swaps in their pockets, so you need somewhere to get rid of all those extras.

"Social media has proved to be excellent for this, via some of the Facebook groups set up purely to swap stickers. Plus you realise just how many people my age are back into it and don't feel quite so sad doing it!"

Similarly, 26-year-old James Roche, from Sevenoaks, is another adult enjoying the highs and lows of collecting.

He started collecting Premier League stickers when he was at primary school but, somewhat unusually, this is his first World Cup album.

So what made him pick it up earlier this year?

"It started when my flatmate and I saw a free Panini book in the supermarket with a starter pack of stickers.

"We'd started to get excited for the World Cup so we picked it up for a bit of fun and then bought some extra packs to boost our numbers.

“ We have found parents are enjoying doing the album with their children; it's time away from screens and a chance to do something together ”

Jessica Tadmor,
Panini UK's head of marketing

"Once we started sticking them in, childhood nostalgia came flooding back and it becomes like an addiction – you just want to fill the album up.

"I managed to convince a few colleagues from work to find their inner child and start collecting too so that provides opportunities to swap with one another, which is much more satisfying than buying the stickers.

"It also means you can do some deals, depending on how desperate the other person is for an elusive sticker."

Jessica Tadmor, head of marketing at Panini UK, said, "There will always be a place for sticker collections. We constantly conduct research and we know there is a booming market out there that spreads far beyond our core audience of boys aged five to 15.

"Panini has the ability to create nostalgia galore among what we call our 'second generation' collectors and this is greatly helped by the interest the Press pays to our collections.

"We've had radio DJs collecting live on air, TV programmes featuring the collection, Twitter going sticker crazy, secret midnight London swapping conventions – the list goes on and on."

But for the employees at Panini, for whom years of hard work preparing for Brazil 2014 is about to come to a climax, she says it's the heartwarming stories of families enjoying time together that makes it all worth it.

"Seeing pictures and tweets of children going through their parents' or grandparents' collections from the last 40 years is incredibly satisfying.

"We have found parents are enjoying doing the album with their children; it's time away from screens and a chance to do something together.

"Dad and lad time' is most definitely about stickers in 2014."

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“THEY say that smell is perhaps the most powerful jogger of memories; capable of rattling about in the deepest recesses of your mind to emerge clutching something you feared long-since forgotten.

But I challenge you to find something more evocative of childhood, more drenched in wonder and awe, than the smell of a football sticker.

And, in particular, a football sticker manufactured by Figurine Panini. Combine the two and you have a more potent scent than the most alluring perfume.

To bottle the tang itself – a subtle blend of not-so-romantic adhesive and paper – would fail to capture the true magic of what it represented.

Would the perm-haired, moustachioed man pictured smiling on its glossy side be a ‘need’ (pronounced in the playground as ‘NEEEEEEEEEED’) or a ‘got’? Or would you turn it over to reveal a glint of silver more thrilling than discovering a Willy Wonka golden ticket as a club badge shone out at you?

Because while collecting football stickers is a somewhat pointless pastime in so many respects, it was an all-consuming affair upon which the axis of your happiness could swing hither and dither.

The desire to have both Frank Stapleton and Alan Sunderland staring out from the Arsenal pages, or a Lou Macari or a Gary Bailey on the Manchester United spread (this being the late 1970s let us not forget) became essential not only to your social status at school, but life itself.

You learned how demand dictated prices. If you had a Terry McDermott or a Kenny Dalglish, for example, by

Got...got...got...NEEEEEED! The intoxicating scent of stickers, school and youth

KoS editor **Chris Britcher** looks back to a childhood where life revolved around the beauty of a football sticker trade...

virtue of them wearing a Liverpool shirt, the price you could get in exchange rocketed.

Don't even get me started on the adrenalin shot should you find yourself with a Liverpool badge. You could practically complete your book by opting to trade to one salivating 'Pool fan desperate for the much desired team's emblem.

They were like finding a giant nugget of pure gold sticking out of your sand pit, such were the riches you could command.

But then this was back in the day when you could buy a packet of five stickers for just 5p.

For many years, I monitored inflation through the price of stickers, my eyes watering as I saw the costs spiral. I almost wanted to make placards and protest when the balance of sticker to pennies swung to 6p for four.

Yet the stickers delivered a layer of knowledge to me that lodged in my



Chris Britcher

brain forever more.

You ended up staring at these little adhesive bits of paper for so long that I can still identify the majority of

players from the early 80s on sight.

They may never have played for their club but were just making up the numbers.

But if they became a frequent 'swap' then they and that difficult hairstyle (the transition between the 70s and 80s was never going to be easy for the fashion conscious footballer) jammed in my head.

Panini were the leaders at the time – very much king of the stickers. Its logo of a knight jousting on the back of a horse would see my hungry hands gently tear open the packet... taking care to keep the reverse of the cards facing front.

With book in hand I would carefully reveal the number on the card – knowing from memory that certain numbers would bring unparalleled joy (early ones would be from my beloved Arsenal, around the midway mark the highly profitable Liverpool) ...my fingers would dance across the pages, lifting those heavy

with stickers, to find what card I had... would it be one to add to the pile of swaps or find itself a home on a virgin piece of sticker album land?

If a 'need' then the careful process of peeling away sticker from backing began... taking care not to crease the corners, breathing in a full lungful of that glorious sticker scent... and then the positioning... avoid the crease... don't make it jaunty and, whatever you do, don't attempt to pull it back up once it was down.

Friends were made, social and class groups were straddled, football stickers united the youth.

It seemed even the bullies played by the unwritten free-market rules of the football sticker. We played football on the playground, we bonded with a few trades. It was, ironically, the glue that held many of us together.

Because for us the game was perfect in those sticker albums. Fresh-faced players whose birth places and former clubs I came to know off by heart and, regardless of how your team performed on the pitch, they were all as one in that album.

I hope there remains a host of youngsters who gather on playgrounds up and down the land with elastic bands wrapped tightly around an ever-growing pile of swaps.

They know just how exciting landing that dream card can be.

And the remarkable social status you achieved if you were able, at the end of the season, to send off for the six cards they so graciously allowed you to buy to complete your collection.

Life possibly never got as good as that again.

■ This article originally appeared in the 'blog' section of our website www.kentnews.co.uk

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Roy, the non-league rover who ended up leading on football's greatest stage

By Greg Miles

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

LEADING England at the Brazil 2014 World Cup will, undoubtedly, be one of the high points on Roy Hodgson's wide and varied CV.

But while the 66-year-old manager will be doing his utmost to secure success in the heat of South America, his journey there began in the less humid and sweaty climes of the Garden of England.

Because as a player, Mr Hodgson spent many years plying his trade in non-league football, becoming well known in Kent.

Born in Croydon in 1947, he initially joined his hometown club of Crystal Palace but was released. He then went on to represent Tonbridge, Maidstone, Gravesend & Northfleet and Ashford Town before leaving for South Africa with another famous county football name, Bobby Houghton, in 1973 to play for Berea Park.

Mr Houghton managed Maidstone in the 1970s and also spent a spell working as an assistant to Bobby Robson during his successful spell at Ipswich Town.

Tony Sitford was a former teammate of Mr Hodgson's after playing



HODGSON'S JOURNEY AROUND KENT

Tonbridge

1969/70 season

Joined from Sutton.

Appearances: 26

Goals: 1

Gravesend & Northfleet

1970/71 season

Appearances: 59 (6 sub)

Goals: 1 in a 2-2 draw at

Rugby Town

Maidstone

1971/72 season

Appearances: 35 (3 sub)

Debut on August 21, 1971 as a substitute in 2-0 win against Woodford Town in the Southern League Cup qualifying round
Goals: 2, against Grays Athletic and Bromley.

Ashford Town

1972/73 season

Appearances: 30

Goals: 3

Final game was on Boxing Day at Hastings when Town lost 3-2.

alongside him at Gravesend in 1971.

He was far from surprised when his former friend got the England job, telling KoS at the time: "He was always interested in coaching. He did everything meticulously well to be honest. He wasn't the greatest player in the world but he was a very good one at that standard."

Mr Hodgson played at full-back and in midfield during his career, and it's in the latter role that Mr Sitford remembers him.

He said: "Roy liked to get the ball down and pass it; he wasn't an aggressive player. He could see a pass very quickly and had good vision."

"He was a genuine type of person." BBC Radio Kent commentator for Ebbsfleet United, Chaz Webster, remembers watching Mr Hodgson play.

He says: "He was a typical non-league player we have all seen so many times. There was no indication he was to become a world-class coach. He played with a smile and

was committed and was enthusiastic.

"I would never come away from a game and say what a great player he was, that he illuminated the Stonebridge Road pitch, because he didn't, and the crowd sometimes got on his back, but he always did his best."

After his spell in South Africa, Mr Hodgson started his managerial career with coaching roles in Sweden, following his old chum Mr Houghton, who, in turn, hired him for a return to English football after he'd taken

the reins at Bristol City in 1980.

Mr Hodgson served as assistant for two years before taking over the hot-seat in 1982, but lasted just four months before getting the sack.

He returned to Sweden and by 1985 had taken over at Malmo – leading them to a string of championships and establishing his reputation.

But it was taking over as Switzerland manager that elevated to the international stage – leading them successfully to the Euro 96 tournament before being poached by Italian giants Inter Milan.

Inter had suffered several seasons of decline and Mr Hodgson restored their pride; putting them back near the top of Serie A.

He returned to English football and the Premier League with Blackburn Rovers in 1997, before spells at various clubs among them the national side of the United Arab Emirates and Finland.

In December 2007, Mr Hodgson joined Fulham, leading them to the Europa League final in 2010, before a brief, ill-fated, spell in charge at Liverpool where he suffered the ignominy of being sacked.

But another Premier League club, West Bromwich Albion, made him manager before his surprise appointment – over the hotly-tipped Harry Redknapp – as England boss in 2012.



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Student frames the Stones as they roll

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

A STUDENT photographer has hit the back of the net after her work proved so powerful it will now form a major part of a project being compiled on the rise from the ashes of non-league football side Maidstone United.

Maria Coombes, 18, who studies creative media at MidKent College, captured numerous impressive shots of the Stones' players, staff and supporters as part of a project run by the arts organisation FrancisKnight.

The on-going project examines the county town's resurgence and return to the town for the first time since it sold its ground just prior to winning promotion to the Football League in 1989. It would spell disaster, though, with the club going bust three years later. It reformed, at the foot of the football pyramid, and is now climbing its way back up the leagues.

The project aims to explore the history of the club through spoken word, performances and images.

Miss Coombes said: "There was a real positive vibe from the Maidstone supporters and I tried to capture that energy in the photos."

"I'm not really into football but it was a big confidence-builder to work on a project like this. It improved my communication skills and provided me with the experience I'll need to become a professional photographer."



CLIMBING BACK: Student photographer Maria Coombes' work will be used to tell the story of Maidstone United's rise back up the non-league ranks

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Mixed messages shows a lack of direction

I DESPAIR. Governments do nothing to educate the public on many issues, particularly on the value of the EU.

Nissan UK exports 85 per cent of its car production, mostly to the EU. Would they have come to Britain if we weren't in the EU?

Answers on a postcard to Nigel Farage, please.

Following Ukip's success in the recent European elections, I wonder how many Ukip voters want to wash cars in supermarket car parks or work unsocial hours caring for the elderly for the minimum wage, under so much time pressure that they can't do the job to a decent standard?

It's a question they need to ask themselves while others ponder why Ukip polled so well. It could be said that in Ukip, we reap the fruits of decades of utterly unimaginative government.

And perhaps failure to address some key concerns. For example, climate change needs bold responses, like ruling out any new runways or airports.

The Tories give in to 'nimby's' over onshore wind farms and then plan to emasculate the planning laws to subject us all to fracking – an extraction method ruled out in the likes of France and Germany.

There is far too much oil shale, which we can't use without committing genocide on our descendants, due to runaway climate change.

Then we appear to buck a global trend; George Osborne cutting short our escalating carbon tax just as China introduces one, thus paving the way for the USA, to introduce one too; hitherto resisted as risking US competitiveness.

And what about renewables? They create jobs and exports; Denmark's Vestas has produced 19 per cent of the world's wind turbines, following huge domestic deployment.

Yet we in the UK are way behind Italy, Germany, Spain, Norway, Serbia and Latvia in using these energy sources.

Beyond the Channel Tunnel and the Olympics, we have squandered our North Sea bonanza on tax reductions, the wretched Trident, and a war of disputed legality.

Governments promise to solve everything by reducing waste, increasing efficiency, and now reducing (!) taxes.

In exchange, all the public services get are pay freezes, staff reductions, endless reorganisations, meddling and exhortations from posh prigs who haven't a clue.

There was a case recently where a GP moved from a leafy suburb to a deprived part of a large northern town which suffered crime, drugs, poor health and lifestyles. They had to put in many unpaid hours to keep up. Why? "To bring more value-added to the job here".

These attitudes are to be found time and time again in public service.

NHS and care costs rise at four per cent per annum due to an ageing population, and expensive medical advances, yet the Queen's Speech almost starts with: "My government will also continue to cut taxes in order to increase people's financial security."

CONCERN:
John Kemp



Retired former Pfizer bio-chemist and now an occasional expert advisor to local Green Party groups, **John Kemp**, reflects on what he believes to be a worrying direction we're moving in...

But despite all of that, there are balancing forces arising in unlikely places. Seattle's first socialist city councillor for 98 years persuaded the council to pass unanimously a minimum

hourly wage of \$15 – more than twice the federal minimum.

Thomas Piketty, distinguished author of *Capital in the 21st Century*, makes a compelling case for a return to progressive taxes and a wealth tax. Apparently Ed Miliband is expressing a keen interest. So perhaps there is hope ahead. Perhaps we shouldn't despair for the future.

■ What do you think? Join the debate and share your views. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford TN25 6SS. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.

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INSPIRING AND POSITIVE: The ethos behind Demelza is that of maximising a child's ability to do live life to the full and to the best of their ability, regardless of illness or disability

Taking step into world where light shines amid shade for whole family

THE sunshine is bright and beautiful as the car travels along a country lane and pulls up in front of what looks like a traditional Kentish oast house.

As rural idylls go, it looks pretty perfect. But this is no bed and breakfast. This is the Demelza children's hospice, the place where children with severe disabilities or life-limiting illnesses come for respite care, in Bobbing, just outside Sittingbourne.

Few of life's ills are tougher to bear, or to even think about, than a very sick child.

And yet, from the moment I open the door and step into the colourful, welcoming building, I can see this is a place of hope and positivity – and determination in the face of the unendurable.

Sitting on one of the bright red sofas in the light and airy lounge, through the windows I can see the garden – the hospice is set in six acres of grounds.

Yet it would be easy to think Demelza is just for end of life care, or that it only focuses on the poorly child.

But Demelza offers a far more holistic approach. It embraces the wider family; dotes on siblings who are perhaps overlooked amid the attention poured onto the sick child; and gives parents who face physical and mental strain caring for their ill son, or daughter, an essential breather.

The hospice's spokeswoman Helen Francis explained: "The main part of what we do is respite care.

"Children can come and stay for one or two nights, or one or two weeks. The whole family can stay, or the child can stay alone.

As part of our on-going support for the children's hospice Demelza, **Sarah Linney** takes a tour of its Sittingbourne site

"In the summer holidays we get a lot of families booking at the same time because they get to know each other and they know they can talk to each other. It is a big thing for people to come here and know they can talk to other parents.

"When your child is ill, you are suddenly thrown into this world where you have to give up your job, learn medical procedures and become more of a nurse. Everything has changed."

It is that strain on the family which often goes overlooked... although not at Demelza.

Mrs Francis adds: "A lot of our parents can't work and might never get a good night's sleep. We have parents whose children are awake every two hours, or need turning or need medication.

"If they come here, the child's medical needs are being looked after and they can have a proper rest."

And it seems that, just like any young person, the children enjoy a bit of freedom from parental control.

"A lot of the time they love being away from their mum and dad," Mrs Francis laughs.

"We look after a lot of children who might be in a wheelchair, but are completely aware of what's going on. They are normal children.

"They have to rely on carers getting them up in the morning and go to bed when their carers put them to bed, but when they come here they

can stay up as late as they like because there are nurses on the night shift.

"Some children might not have a bath at home – they might just have a shower trolley – and to be able to have a really nice, long, relaxing bath with bubbles and lights is a real luxury."

And brothers and sisters are catered for too.

"We do lots of work with siblings, doing activities and taking them out on trips," Mrs Francis says.

"If you have a child who is very ill, sometimes the brothers and sisters get forgotten about because the worry and focus is on the ill child.

"They can feel a bit isolated as they may not know anyone else of their age who is going through the same thing, but here they are surrounded

by people in the same situation who they can talk to."

The hospice takes children from birth up to the age of 19 and has 10 bedrooms, so all children have their own room, sharing a bathroom with the room next door.

There is also en-suite family accommodation where the whole family can stay together, with cooking and washing facilities if they want to use them.

I'm led through to the kitchen and dining room where light streams in through huge windows.

The whole building was designed by architect Derek Phillips – who founded the charity 16 years ago with his wife Jennifer in memory of their daughter, Demelza – and the kitchen is designed to look like a Kentish country kitchen.

"We have children who can't eat orally so they are fed through a tube. But we try to get everyone to the table so it is a social occasion," Mrs Francis explains.

We walk through the corridors to the computer room, past endless toys, and walls covered with artwork the children have created.

The computer room is full of special equipment, all donated by a charity called Lifelites, including touchscreens and a giant squishy mouse which children who don't have much hand movement can use.

Then there's the music room.

"You might have children who can hardly hear," Mrs Francis says, "but if you sit them at the piano they can feel the vibrations.

"We get children who can't speak or walk, but they can still communicate through music or art.

"There is a sound beam where you make music just by moving or cutting a beam of light. If you have a child who can only blink, who can't move their hands or arms, they can create a CD of music for the family."

She says this so matter-of-factly that I have to stop, and review what has just been said in my head so I can make sense of it... a child who can only blink.

That is the moment when I begin to comprehend what this place really means.

When I think of a child who can only blink, I think instinctively of all the things that child can't do; all the suffering created by those limitations.

But at Demelza they think of all the things that child can do. All the possibilities their disability must not be allowed to prevent. All the options open to that person.

If keeping my inner child under control was tough in the music room, it is almost impossible in the multi-sensory room. This is an interactive room designed to stimulate children's senses in different ways and can be used to help those with sensory problems, or who are upset and need to be soothed.

There is a waterbed with fibreoptic lights, a ball pit, mats, bubble tubes, a multicoloured fan light, a music system and soft cubes, which children

“ I didn't want to leave because they had helped me for seven years and I like to think that by volunteering I am helping them in return ”

Lucy Hudson,
Demelza patient and volunteer

GO DOTTY: HAVE FUN AND RAISE FUNDS



DEMELZA stages its biggest fund-raising event of the year this week, as its Go Dotty campaign gets under way again.

Having started on Friday, the week-long series of events is its main community event with everything from sponsored walks to special charity performances taking place across the county.

And Kent on Sunday has lent its weight to the charity week this year – encouraging our readers to dig deep to help the hospice.

What's more, we had a special visit from Dotty, the campaign's mascot, who visited our offices to oversee the production of this week's paper.

As you can see, his editorial decision was that we should turn part of our masthead dotty on the front cover this week – and we were only too happy to oblige.

Editor Chris Britcher (pictured left with Dotty) said: "We always look to highlight the county's worthwhile charities, and we believe Demelza is one of the best."

"It's been a pleasure to support



the hospice and I hope our coverage has highlighted so much of the good work it does."

■ For details on Go Dotty events near you, to find out more information about the hospice, or to donate, visit its website at www.demelza.org.uk

can hold onto to help them balance if they have difficulty.

Before I can no longer resist the temptation to jump into the ball pit and play, we move onto the art room where a group of children are doing finger painting and making letters.

"Little ones who don't have a lot of movement can still do finger and hand prints," my guide explains. "They make a lot of memories in here that their parents can take home with them."

Another of the hospice's most popular facilities is the hydrotherapy pool – a 1.3m-deep expanse of water with a jacuzzi at one end and a temperature much warmer than a normal pool.

"The children who come here can't use public swimming pools as the water is too cold and the changing facilities are often not disabled friendly," Mrs Francis explains.

"Here they can just get changed by the pool and walk in. And because of the buoyancy of the water, children who are in wheelchairs can walk from one end to the other."

The soft play room is packed with items like a trampoline, a ball pit, lights that go off if you throw balls at them, tunnels with fibreoptic lights and a light beam that you can wave a bat in front of to make music; a truly remarkable place.

"If you have a child with a disability or who is in a wheelchair, they probably can't use normal soft play areas," Mrs Francis explains.

"They are not going to hurt themselves here because it is all cushioned if they fall over, and they can come in with their brothers and sisters."

Upstairs is the Tiz room for the over-15s, where teenagers can make food, watch DVDs, play table football and generally enjoy a bit of independence.

I meet Lucy Hudson, 20, who suffers from myotonic muscular dystrophy, a muscle-wasting disease.

Lucy has been coming to Demelza since she was 12, and is now at college studying health and social care.

As part of her course, she volunteers

in the hospice's marketing and communications department every Friday.

"I didn't know about Demelza before I was 12 – I could have started coming in when I was four," she explains.

"Demelza helped me with college and helped with my self-confidence."

"I didn't want to leave because they had helped me for seven years and I like to think that by volunteering I am helping them in return."

Outside is a spectacular playground, which features a giant adventure ship called HMS Demelza. The playground is fully wheelchair accessible, with even a wheelchair accessible swing.

Nearby is the Garden of Tranquillity, a quiet place filled with water features, fish and thousands of plants where children can play and bereaved families can come to reflect.

Stones dotted around the garden bear the names of children who have died.

“A child's disability doesn't have to stop them doing things. We want them to have opportunities and fun like anyone else their age”

Helen Francis,

On the ethos of Demelza

It is a reminder that despite all the life injected into a child's days, the hospice does cater for those with life-limiting illness.

And when the inevitable occurs, it is ready.

"It's never going to be easy, but this makes it that little bit easier," Mrs Francis says.

"If the parents don't really know how to tell their other children we can give advice on the best way of breaking the news to them."

"And if a child dies, the support doesn't stop. We offer counselling and we are

here for the family as long as they need us. There are events for bereaved families every year, where brothers and sisters can do memory-making activities."

As well as the Kent hospice, the charity also runs a six-bed centre in Eltham, south London, and provides a hospice at home service in East Sussex, where nurses care for children in their own homes so parents can have a break.

With 800 families on its books, 200 staff and 1,300 volunteers, the hospice needs £9 million a year to keep going.

A small amount of this comes from the Government, and there is also money from sources such as Children In Need, but most comes from fund-raising, including legacies and gifts, collections, fund-raising events, the hospice's shops across the county, its lottery, and corporate support.

I cannot begin to imagine how they raise such a staggering amount.

"We do need the constant support of the community in Kent to carry on day in, day out," Mrs Francis says.

"And that money is just for us to stand still. If we want to do more, or update our facilities, we need to raise more. It's not easy – and there is growing demand. We are still not reaching out to all the families who need us. Some of them don't know that we are here, or what we do."

"And some of them are scared about coming to a hospice because it has an association with end of life care, or because they think that coming here is admitting they can't cope, or they don't feel able to leave their child with anyone else."

"People think it is going to be like a hospital, but it is the most incredible, positive, cheery, inspiring place," Mrs Francis says.

"The ethos is very much making the most of every moment. We have a team of amazing nurses and care assistants. A child's disability doesn't have to stop them doing things. We want them to have opportunities and fun like anyone else their age."

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REMINDERS:
The Red Sands
Maunsell fort and
(top left) the Phoenix
Caisson just off
Littlestone and (left)
the Mulberry
Harbour being used
by the US Army

Picture: RUSS GARRETT



Pictures: ENGLISH HERITAGE



Reminders off the coast reveal story of nation's wartime past

AS CROWDS flock to the seaside this summer, lurking off our coastline are some remarkable relics of a nation at war.

With the recent 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy being marked on both sides of the Channel, it is sobering that some of the key fortifications constructed by the Allies to help defeat the German forces across the water remain in place today.

Just this month, part of a floating harbour designed for use on the Normandy beaches, but which became stuck on a sandbank off the coast at Littlestone-on-Sea, was designated "an ancient scheduled monument" by conservation group English Heritage.

Clearly visible at low tide, and known as the Phoenix caisson, it was designed to form part of the Mulberry Harbour – a mobile port facility used by the Allies and designed to sink or float as necessary.

It was an essential part of plans to land more than 100,000 soldiers on the Normandy beaches as part of the invasion.

However, it got jammed on the sandbank and it has remained there ever since – a lasting reminder of one of the Second World War's great turning points.

Explains Veronica Fiorato, of English Heritage: "The caisson is a tangible reminder of Operation Overlord and its contribution to world history. It has stayed exactly where it was parked and survives in very good condition, having lost only its anti-aircraft gun mounting."

Despite the passing of 70 years, there are still many relics that recall the sacrifices made during the Second World War, reports **Jamie Weir...**

And it is not alone: As thousands head into Whitstable and Herne Bay, on the horizon looking over the Thames Estuary are the distinct Maunsell Forts.

They sit on tripod-like stilts miles out to sea, dwarfed by the nearby Kentish Flats wind turbines, but intriguing all who peer towards them.

Built as an essential defence during the Second World War, they remain little altered since the days of raids by the German Luftwaffe. Tourists still flock to sign up to boat trips which take you across the choppy waters to see them looming up from the deep up close.

But why are they there? The port of London was one of the busiest in the world at the outbreak of war in 1939 – with a huge number of ships using it every day – and to reach it, vessels needed to travel down the Thames, wrapping along the north Kent coast.

Ian Beckett, professor of military history at the University of Kent explains: "The forts evolved from the need to prevent German aircraft dropping mines in the Thames Estuary as well as preventing activity by Germany's fast attack E-boats; the latter especially after the fall of France in 1940."

The mines were a hugely disruptive force in the water channel.

Dropped by planes flying over the area, they bobbed just below the surface. But rather than exploding on impact with a boat's hull, they were triggered, instead, by magnetic sensors.

The sensors would register the steel hull of a ship when they came close to the mine, detonating as they passed.

Damage was extensive. To the extent that the War Office became urgently aware of the need to do something to protect shipping in the area.

Initially the defensive ring around the estuary came in the form of battleships, placed strategically to protect it from Nazi bombers.

But this solution proved too resource intensive, leaving the military lacking in ships and men to use elsewhere.

The Maunsell Forts, however, were the perfect solution.

Explains Professor Beckett: "Guy Maunsell had worked on the idea before the war and was then requested to start afresh in October 1940 by the Admiralty."

"Agreement to proceed was given in March

1941 with four naval forts to be built by the firm Messrs Holloway Brothers at the Red Lion Wharf at Gravesend."

His initial plans were quite different to those that remain visible from the coast today.

He based them loosely on the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. It took the form of two large, hollow, reinforced concrete pillars, which were mounted on to a floating barge. Then a large platform was built to straddle the pillars which housed gun emplacements.

The forts stood an imposing 33-metres high, weighing 4,500 tonnes each. They were armed with four heavyweight anti-aircraft guns.

Professor Beckett said: "Once built, the forts were floated on their base, a pontoon like structure, to their final resting place."

"They were then sunk. The first fort was only completed in February 1942 and was put in position with some difficulty. The other three were placed between June and July 1942."

Two were positioned in the estuary – one off the Margate coast on Tongue Sands, the other 12 miles off the coast of Herne Bay known as Knock John.

These sea forts were manned by 120 men who would do a six-week tour of duty before being allowed 10 days shore leave.

Professor Beckett said: "It must have been a fairly mundane existence."

In 1943, as the war progressed, the Army wanted more fortifications and so Guy Maunsell was called upon again.

Different to the original sea forts, the Army

Win tickets to The War and Peace Revival 2014



THE greatest military show on earth is back at Folkestone Racecourse from July 16-20, 2014, and the organisers have lots planned to help this year go with a bang!

This year is an important year with the commemoration of the centenary of the First World War, the 75th anniversary of the start of the Second World War and the 70th anniversaries of both D-Day and Arnhem – and where better to commemorate these events than at The War and Peace Revival, the exciting five-day military and vintage festival?

Featuring battle re-enactments and arena events, military and civilian re-enactors, living history, military vehicles, vintage entertainment, book signings, shopping, funfair and models, it's a great family day out. The Vintage

Village features civilian displays from the 1930s to the 1960s including Home Front, Land Army (with real animals!) classic cars, vintage fashion shows, makeovers and much more. Live music day and night gives a real festival feel to the event. Camping is available, with exclusive evening entertainment, so you won't miss out on a moment!

Ticketed events during the weekend are the fabulous Jive Aces, the UK's number one jive and swing band. Dance till you drop at this fun lively evening held in the Victory Marquee on July 18. There is also the Kent-based John Miller Orchestra on July 19 in a dinner and entertainment spectacular! And for our 'Allo! 'Allo! fans, you can book tickets to sit at a table hosted by one of the six original cast members during the John Miller evening.

The event is just a couple of minutes off J11 of the M20 with plenty of free parking. Mainline Westernhanger station is immediately next door and the High Speed train will stop just for us on Saturday and Sunday, July 19-20.

See www.thewarandpeacefestival.co.uk or call 01304 813337. Day tickets can be used on any one day!

We're offering lucky readers the chance to win one of four pairs of adult day tickets (to attend the event on any chosen day) along with a pair of tickets to see the spectacular Jive Aces on Friday, July 18:

■ To enter please answer the following question: Which marquee will the Jive Aces be appearing in?

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Winners will be selected from all correct entries. The promoter's decision is final.

Usual terms and conditions apply. Please note, if you enter after the closing deadline of June 24, 2014, your entry will not be valid, but you still may be charged.

SMS services are provided by BBA Digital Helpline (telephone 0844 3572403).

Alternatively, enter by post to War and Peace Competition, Archant KOS Media, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Kent TN25 6SS.

forts were to take the shape of a larger group of buildings, all of which would be interconnected by a series of walkways.

Each fort comprised seven different towers, standing on tripod-like concrete legs which had a 'picture frame' base on the sea bed. The legs supported a two-storey high steel box which measured 11 metres by 11 metres.

Professor Beckett said: "The Army forts were designed by Maunsell in 1941 for use in the Humber and Mersey estuaries although the Humber plan was abandoned in January, 1943. Three were placed in the Thames Estuary between July and December, 1943 at the Nore, off Sheppey, and the Red Sands and Shivering Sands off Herne Bay and Whitstable."

The seven individual structures were based on land anti-aircraft batteries.

With a control tower at their centre, it was armed with radar to alert them to incoming Luftwaffe raids. The control tower was surrounded by a further four structures which were armed with 3.7 inch guns, whilst the other two towers had smaller arms, with the tower furthest from the group housing searchlights.

Although these new Army forts were initially crewed by 165 men, this figure rose to 265 less than a year after they first opened.

This was because by 1943, the Germans had begun using their new VI 'flying bomb'. These flew much faster than the planes which the forts

were designed to defend against. If the forts' crew stood any chance of hitting them, the gun emplacements needed to be constantly ready.

The crews of the Army forts served for a four week term, before being allowed back to shore for 10 days where they would be stationed at the Drill Hall in Gillingham.

Conditions aboard both the sea and Army forts were cramped, stressful and isolated for the men who were posted to them.

Professor Beckett said: "The forts were to prove useful in combatting the VI flying bombs after June 1944. In all, the forts shot down 22 aircraft and 30 V1s and destroyed one E-boat."

When the war ended in 1945 the forts remained occupied by maintenance crews.

By 1956 the MoD saw no further use for them and they were decommissioned.

Professor Beckett explains: "The guns were taken off the Army forts in 1956 but not from the sea forts until 1992. The latter guns were sent to the museum at Scapa Flow, but one is in New Tavern Fort at Gravesend.

"A Swedish ship collided with the Nore fort, to the north of Sheppey, in March, 1953 and four civilian caretakers were killed. Shivering Sands was also hit by a ship in June, 1963. A pirate radio station operated from the Shivering Sands for a number of years."

Today they remain a stark reminder of our modern history, of the county's strategic position, and of challenges and tragedy which faced those involved in the conflict.



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Controversial call to ban parking near our schools to battle obesity

Medway councillor Mike O'Brien has put forward a radical solution to make our children fitter, and it is growing in support. **Sarah Linney** reports

PARENTS should be made to walk their children at least part of the way to school to combat rising levels of child obesity, a councillor has proposed.

The controversial idea comes from Mike O'Brien, portfolio holder for children's services on Medway Council.

He is calling for parents doing the school run to be banned from parking within half a mile of their child's school, forcing them to give their children some exercise.

"I want to change the school run to the school walk," Cllr O'Brien said.

"Twenty per cent of children in Medway are obese when they start secondary school, and that figure is increasing.

"We all accept that is wrong and we can't allow it to continue, so we need to take every step we can to do something about it."

Thirty per cent of adults in Medway are obese, compared with a national average of some 24.2 per cent.

Almost 10 per cent of children in the area are obese by the time they start primary school, which rises to more than 20 per cent by the time they are in Year Six – although this is not far above the national average of 18.9 per cent.

The World Health Organisation says it "regards childhood obesity as one of the most serious global public health challenges for the 21st century".

It adds: "Obese children and adolescents are at an increased risk of developing various health problems, and are also more likely to become obese adults."

The health problems associated with obesity, including increased risk of heart attacks, strokes and diabetes, are well documented.

But Cllr O'Brien says the benefits of walking to school extend far beyond a healthy lifestyle.

"When you walk, you talk to people," the Conservative councillor said.

"Children meet their friends, mums and dads meet other mums and dads... it helps with isolation and community as well as health and well-being.

"When I was young, we walked everywhere – and there was still traffic on the roads.

"It is a manageable half a mile – so is a mile a day – and the big thing about walking is it's free.

"And it has to be better than being stuck in a traffic jam."

Few would argue with the spirit of the suggestion or the desire to make children fitter and healthier.

But despite the obvious health benefits of walking, many parents still choose to drive their children even short distances – whether out of concerns over road safety, potential abductors or simply a perceived lack of time.

"Often the reason is they are too busy, or they have one child at one school and one child at another. I sympathise with that," said the councillor.

"But there are 33 walking bus schemes in Medway [where children walk to school in big groups along a set route, accompanied by adults].

"I can understand peoples' concerns about safety and we have got to ensure we extend the walking bus scheme.

"But the reality is we either do something or we do nothing. And we can't afford to do nothing. We

need to take steps which are outside the box."

Cllr O'Brien appeared on BBC Radio 4 and BBC Radio 5 to discuss the proposals and says he has had a great deal of feedback from around the country.

"I've sometimes been accused of looking through rose-tinted glasses, but the majority of people agree with me," he said.

"Those who don't come up with all sorts of reasons, and we need to look at those reasons.

"It will be fraught with difficulties, and where it's impractical, it's impractical."

Of course, maintaining a healthy weight is not just about exercise but about diet too – but Cllr O'Brien says both are important.

He said: "We are proposing to ban fast food takeaways from opening near schools and the NHS is already doing what it can to encourage healthy eating.

"We already have free swimming for under-16s in Medway, which hundreds of young people take advantage of.

"This is one of the ways to tackle the problem. It's part of a big jigsaw. I am happy to listen to any suggestion anyone has on the issue."

However, Margaret Morrissey, the founder of parents' campaign group Parents Outloud, said the proposals were unrealistic.

"No-one can argue with the fact walking is good for children's health – but being realistic, the majority of people are dropping children off and going to work or have to be at another school or have smaller children," she said.

"You'd have to leave home earlier, then find somewhere to park – it would add probably 20 minutes to half an hour onto the journey every morning.

"And those few minutes in the morning make a huge difference.

"It's not practical when the weather's bad – and it will just be a problem for wherever the parents do park.

"We are not living in times past, we are living in today's world, where parents have to get into work.

"Not all parents can walk their children to school.

"My son lives in Appledore, near Ashford, which would be about a six to eight-mile walk from the school his children go to."

She said there were more effective solutions to the problem of children being severely overweight.

"I suggest he [Cllr O'Brien] gets all the children who live in flats into houses and provides gardens, more play provision and more playing fields," Mrs Morrissey said.

"Or get schools to put into the curriculum a time when children go out walking with the school. I think we also have to look at the kind of food we allow to be produced.

"Ready meals have huge amounts of sugar and fat in. Towns are stuffed with takeaways and shops have sweets laid everywhere. Parents are an easy target.

"A lot of obesity is about the individual's metabolism.

"People should find out before they start throwing accusations."

■ **What do you think? Share your views: write to The Editor, KoS, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford TN25 6SS. Or email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**



CONCERN: World Health Organisation regards child obesity as the challenge for 21st century

“I’ve sometimes been accused of looking through rose-tinted glasses, but people agree with me. Those who don’t come up with all sorts of reasons, and we need to look at those reasons”

Mike O'Brien, portfolio holder for children services at Medway



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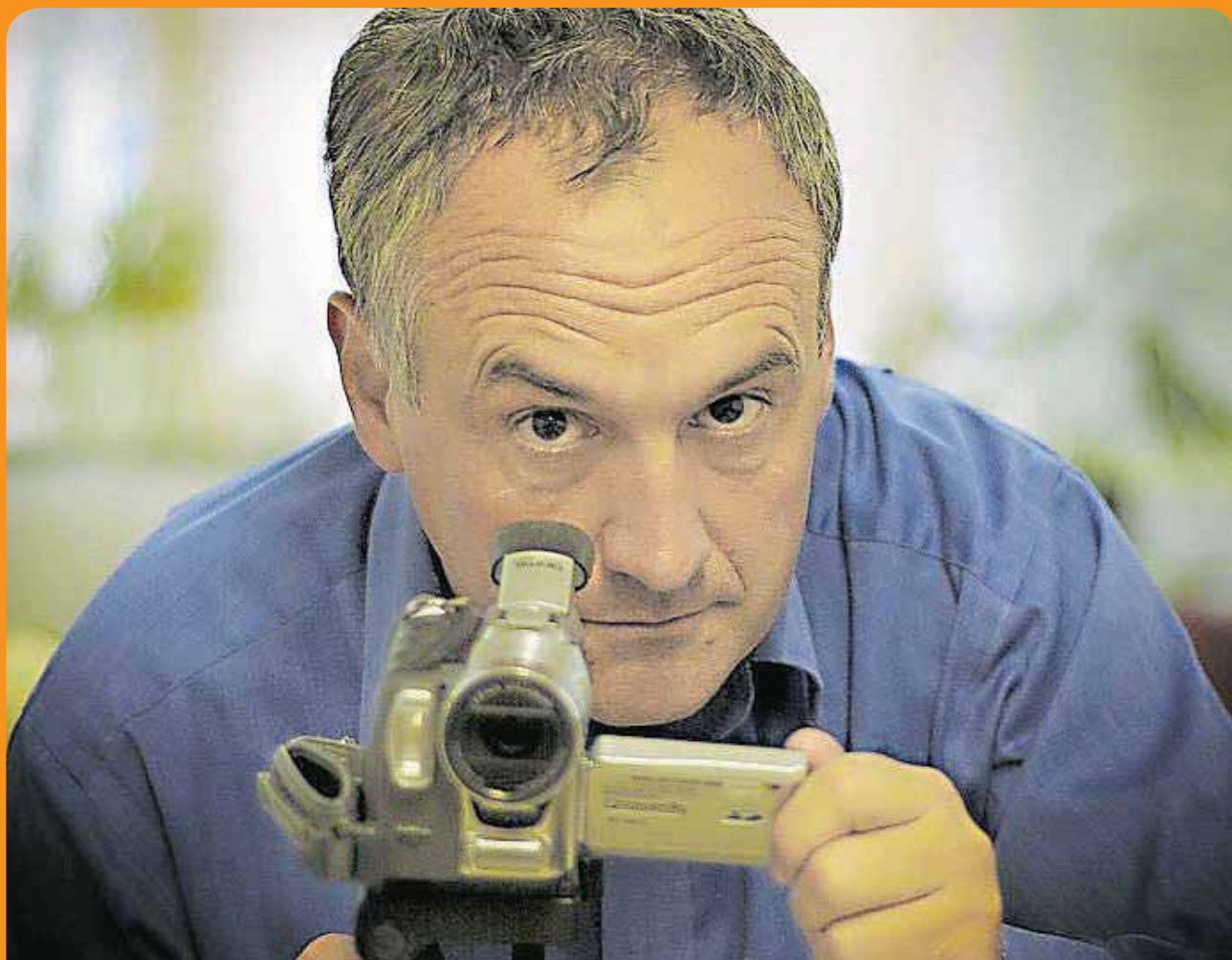
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IN THE PICTURE: Journalist Norman Thomas and his partner, film-maker Christine Tongue, are the publishing force behind journal Thanet Watch

Pair determined to bring 'Isle of Dead' back to life

David Mairs talks to publishers Norman Thomas and Christine Tongue, whose magazine aims to give a true picture of what is going on in Thanet

THANET. What are we to do with Thanet?

So often portrayed as the basket case of southern England for its perceived social and economic ills, its reputation so often tarnished by a council that at times in the past has appeared to represent all that is bad about local government. And yet a place that inspires fierce loyalty among its citizens, native and adopted alike.

Such has been the seemingly ceaseless whirlpool of scandal, rumour and misadventure relating to the 'Isle of the Dead', the unfortunate name once attributed to it in centuries past, that a thriving political blog scene in the first decade of this one was testament to the fervour and the passion engendered by the place.

And today there is a monthly journal, Thanet Watch, that presents a rich gamut of views, opinion and observation, together with genuine reporting on many issues.

The force behind Thanet Watch comprises partners Christine Tongue, a film-maker, and journalist Norman Thomas, whose first media foray in the area was their film Thanet On Film.

It proved so successful that people queued to get into the (admittedly quite small) Windsor Cinema in Broadstairs to enjoy it.

Either way, the pair were on to something.

"We were making films, featuring environmental and social issues," said Tongue.

"We were doing one or two DVDs a year, but it wasn't enough to keep

up with what was going on in Thanet. The place needs an eye on what's going on."

Of which more later, but it will be instructive to go back many years and many miles to where it all

“ We were doing one or two DVDs a year, but it wasn't enough to keep up with what was going on in Thanet ”

began and a company called TV Choice that in 1982 employed the pair.

"It was primarily a publisher of a weekly magazine called TV Choice, which was a selective guide to television and radio," said Tongue.

"But TV Times and Radio Times said we were infringing their copyright. All they did was get an injunction – then Time Out got involved and made a big case out of it. It became a bit of a cause célèbre and at one point it was heading to the House of Lords, but we pulled out as we didn't have the money – we were bankrupting ourselves with legal costs.

"We weren't infringing copyright – we didn't know how to. They would say 'How could they possibly know that?', but we just spoke to the producers. TV was very predictable at the time, although Channel 4 had just started."

"We got some things wrong – made some terrible blunders.

"There was a Samuel Beckett

Continued on page 36 »

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Choral society conductor to celebrate 30-year association by leading the Royal Philharmonic

Richard Cooke will join list of prestigious contemporaries by taking rostrum at forthcoming concert

THIS month's Canterbury Choral Society (CCS) concert in the city cathedral will be a very special occasion as it marks the 30th anniversary of conductor Richard Cooke's time with the society.

Further, he will be conducting the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) at the event.

The RPO, based in London, was formed by Sir Thomas Beecham in 1946 and has gone on to become one of the most prestigious orchestras of its time, with conductors including Vladimir Ashkenazy, Charles Mackerras and Yehudi Menuhin.

The concert, on Saturday, June 21, will be Ludwig van Beethoven's Missa Solemnis.

"I have long regarded it as one of the very greatest of works," said Cooke.

"It stretches choir, orchestra and soloists to a limit but achieves a magnificence and depth of expression that is unsurpassed in any other work, even though a few others might also reach the same heights.

"CCS performs this work with



LEADING LIGHTS: Richard Cooke, main picture, will be joined by soloists Sarah Fox, left, James MacDougall and Gaynor Keeble for the cathedral concert

the confidence that it knows it needs to achieve what it demands.

"The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra will provide a world-class orchestral performance."

Beethoven composed Missa Solemnis for the enthronement of his friend and pupil Archduke Rudolph as Archbishop of Olmütz, completing it three years after the enthronement ceremony.

Beethoven was not a religious man – there is no anecdotal evidence of his ever having chosen to attend a

church service – but in his final years he did become deeply spiritual.

This work, one of only three overtly religious works in his output, is the most representative of that.

It was on the manuscript of this work that Beethoven wrote the words "From the heart – may it return to the heart".

There is a theatricality to the Missa Solemnis that has led many commentators to suggest that it is more appropriate to the concert hall than the church.

With four soloists and a choir, some have even suggested it should be regarded more as a short opera than anything else.

The soloists chosen by Cooke for this performance all have firm roots in opera and include Sarah Fox, who has sung in Wagner's Der Ring des Nibelungen for the Royal Opera House, and Gaynor Keeble, winner of the London Lieder Prize and with many opera roles to her name, including one in Peter Grimes for the Aldeburgh Festival.

The male soloists will be James MacDougall, who is the nation's voice of classical music for BBC Radio Scotland and a regular presenter on BBC Radio 3.

The bass part will be sung by Michael Pearce, a firm favourite with Canterbury audiences.

■ Tickets can be bought from the Marlowe Theatre box office on 01227 787787 or online at www.marlowetheatre.com. Visit www.canterbury.co.uk for information on the choral society.

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SECRECY ROW CONTINUES

Thanet Council

TOP SECRET

So what do they have to hide?

November Events Listings

« Continued from page 33

play that was on at 6pm and not 10pm, as we'd said."

In the scheme of things, it's not the greatest shocker in the world, but a healthy bit of self-deprecation is never a bad thing.

It's something that comes across when Thomas talks about his early days in journalism in his home city of Cardiff.

"I was part of a student community paper, The Cardiff Link, which had weekly listings and investigative stories. There was a bias towards student stories central to Cardiff. I trained myself on that," he said.

He moved on to London and writing for the computer trade.

"It was office technology and computer games. I knew very little about computers and was just busily rattling away with the typewriter and faxing. There was very little technology."

It was in the capital that he met Christine, who had lived in Wolverhampton for her first 33 years.

"He had a big expense account – that was one of his attractions at the time," she said with a smile.

"I was studying philosophy and English at university and he offered to type my Masters – that's how he wormed his way into my affections."

Whatever the initial motives, a strong partnership had been begun and by 1991 the pair had bought a house in Broadstairs, although they still lived and worked in the city.

"The big recession and fall in house prices made the move possible," said Thomas.

That and a suitably dramatic tale for a journalist...

"On Halloween 1986, I was run over by a drink-driver in Westminster. I'd saved Christine's life by pushing her forward. I just remember being on the pavement dying."

Happily, a police car was flagged down and an ambulance arrived to prevent the worst.

Thomas said: "The bloke was fined £600 and banned for two years. I don't remember the accident. If I saw the guy again, I wouldn't recognize him. My philosophy is not to dwell

“The beaches are one thing you'd think they couldn't blight, but look at what's happening with Ramsgate seafront”

on things.

"The funny thing was, I had been working late and went for a drink. I was in the pub urinals and there was a guy next to me dressed as the Grim Reaper – I do remember that."

The compensation for the accident was enough to fund the purchase of the Broadstairs house and three years after buying it the pair moved to Thanet for good. They were, of course, classic DfLs (Down from London).

Or not, given what was to follow.

"We fell passionately in love with Thanet," said Thomas.

"The beaches, what's left of the countryside, the architecture.

"We feel an anger at things that are happening here that are

damaging the area, the environment and people's quality of life."

His partner chips in at this point.

"Also it was too interesting, what was going on," she said.

"We want to highlight that change. It's been mostly for the worst in terms of loss of green space – it's really, really criminal."

"The beaches are the one thing you'd think they couldn't blight, but look at what's happening with Ramsgate seafront."

"We want to say it's a really beautiful area and that with the right management this could be a wonder of Britain."

"It's been dumped on – the rubbish bin of the country. You walk on a sunny day and see all these wonderful things, then you come across a mad piece of development or one that's been delayed for years."

"There's rubbish and broken widows, certainly – it's like after a festival. But the official, legal vandalism that goes on is much worse – the rubbish is nothing compared with the official stuff."

"We can only write or make a film about it. We can only do it in concert with other people, though."

And do those people appear?

Apathy dominates at almost every level in every place, it seems, so are the good and caring folk of Thanet getting involved?

"People get in touch and ask what we can do about it all," Thomas said.

"The problem is people's fear to put their heads above the parapet – they're afraid of the economic repercussions for themselves, friends and family. It's understandable – it's a poor area."

Tongue struck a similar tone.

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FINGER ON THE PULSE: Christine Tongue aims to shed light on the gloom

"We're finding that more people are speaking out, but, apart from the fear of damaging livelihoods in such a close-knit area, people are worried about what might happen to them."

The fear, the pair say, is twofold. There's the danger of upsetting the wrong people and ending up losing your job or, say, a contract for your business. More sinister, though, is the suggestion that darker, more criminal, forces are at work.

It might be easy to dismiss such claims as just more yarns in the rumour mill that is this eastern tip of Kent – and what you'd expect from a man who wrote and presented a play entitled *Gangsters In Thanet*.

"We do get told stories of what's going on and people tell us they'll come and talk, but most of these guys don't show up," said Thomas.

Whether you choose to believe there are such forces at work or not,

it is undeniable that Thanet has lost much of its open land to an onslaught of housing development over recent decades, a puzzling phenomenon given the fact the official statistics tell us there is little work available for all those in-comers, let alone those who already live here.

The strange situation is not lost on either individual.

"All these houses are being built when we're still in recession and there's no one lined up to buy them," said Tongue.

Her partner picked up the theme. "You can fill up every green space there is and the homeless will still be there. There's no justification to keep building," said Thomas.

Despite the subject matter, the pair come over as cheery, light-hearted souls, while Thanet Watch, they stress, is far from all doom and gloom.

"Since we came here, we have made

a series of films showing the beautiful and the bad things of Thanet," said Tongue.

"The role of Thanet Watch is to protect the best of what's here and give a guide to people new to the

“If people want to see us as an anarchic centre of subversiveness, that's up to them – we are known as Red Hall Massive”

area – the arts, local history and the environment. That is what's at the core. And, yes, we are trying to stop what is going on here.

"Preserve what you've got – stop cutting trees down. We've got Grade 1 farmland – why build on it?"

"We've got beautiful beaches –

why try to build on them?"

Thomas stressed the positive:

"We should all be concentrating on trying to make Thanet as attractive and environmentally sustainable as it can be. If we make the place as good as it can be, people will come. There are lots of houses, so people can move here.

"It surely can't be a bad thing to make a place as beautiful as it can be for the people who live here and the people who are coming in."

Gangsters In Thanet was performed at The Red Hall, the Broadstairs building that forms a base for Thanet Watch.

Such a name can create an immediate impression as to the pair's ideological bedrock, but any such conclusions might be wide of the mark. The explanation is in fact far more pragmatic.

Thomas said: "This was the Red Cross training centre – it was all a legacy from the Red Cross, who were going to sell it off for flats.

"We thought that was a bad thing to happen and we were looking for offices. They could rent back from us every Tuesday evening for their training.

"We thought we'd change the name of the place, but people said you can't do that – this is what it's known as. We do associate more with red than with blue, sure, but it's not as clear-cut as that."

Laughing, he added: "If people want to see us as an anarchic centre of subversiveness, that's up to them – after all, we're known as the Red Hall Massive."

The hall hosts 50 at most and its

relatively small size is not an issue to the 'Massive'.

"We could have gone looking for some huge venue," said Thomas.

"It's good to have a place where people can talk. We want people and political representatives from all sides here – the basic common denominator is do you have an interest in the area.

"We've hosted am-dram productions and groups like Friends of the Earth. The hall covers costs, but we have lots of organisations that don't pay to use it."

It won't come as surprise to learn there is now a Thanet Watch website (thanetwatch.wordpress.com) alongside the magazine, so where might the whole thing wind up?

"We don't want to turn Thanet Watch into a huge business," said Thomas. "It just provides enough to live on, really. It might be good if one day it could give us a salary. We live on savings to a degree."

TV Choice is now run from Bromley and there's no involvement in its operation, so for Christine Tongue and Norman Thomas of The Red Hall life will be largely centered on Thanet Watch.

"If people don't make a fuss, things can only get worse," said Tongue.

"That plays into the hands of the people who might want to run things for their own benefit.

"That's what Thanet Watch is dedicated to – not allowing people to operate in the gloom. They benefit by being able to operate in the gloom, in the shade."

■ Thanet Watch is available in newsagents across the isle. You can also subscribe – phone 07989 070843 or email inmeds@yahoo.

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A fully independent public house and restaurant, the Anchor and Hope, is situated in the heart of the picturesque village of Ash. Recently refurbished and under new management, this country pub retains all the charms of a 16th century inn, whilst being bright, modern and family friendly.

New management, Ben and Emma, have been running The Waggon At Hale in Chatham for the past 3 years. They turned their sights to the Anchor & Hope and have given it a completely new lease of life.

Country walkers will find not just a welcoming respite for a refreshing break, but a restaurant that provides an eclectic and varied selection of traditional pub food and modern bistro dining. A children's menu is also available, as well as a well equipped play area within the beer garden.

Homely overnight accommodation, with an included full English or Continental breakfast, is available in one of the 6 double rooms, which have also been tastefully furnished.

On-site parking is available and the pub is wheelchair accessible for any visitors that require such facilities. Whilst not currently needed, the bar area boasts a glorious fireplace so that when winter comes, all visitors can benefit from the warmth and charm of an open fire.

Retreat to the bar and you will find not only plenty of well known beers, wines and spirits, but it is also home to Kent Ale. The restaurant, whilst separate from the bar area, is light and open but still retains its historical charm and relaxed atmosphere. Following the popularity of Ben and Emma's gourmet evenings, charity quiz nights (supporting The Milly Foundation www.themillyfoundation.co.uk) and wine and cheese evenings, they are pleased to announce that they will all be coming to the Anchor and Hope. The Gourmet Evenings allow you to sample exquisite food from around the world, with complementing wines from each of the regions sampled. During the summer months, come along and enjoy the summer bar and BBQ.

So the next time you are out and about, pop in and come and see what we have done to the old place. Maybe even take the weight off of your feet and enjoy the countryside as it is supposed to be.

» For more food and drink articles pick up a copy of this month's

KENT LIFE



MEET THE GANG: Jamie Oliver with, from left, DJ BBQ, Kerrann Dunlop and Cupcake Jemma

Too many cooks definitely not spoiling Jamie's kitchen

In a nondescript old warehouse there is a secret army at work cooking up a storm led by one of the UK's top celebrity chefs, as **Kate Whiting** found out

NILE Street, in London's East End, is Jamie Oliver HQ, from where the chef and his team of cooks mastermind his next move... or maybe not.

"Everyone always seems to think there's a massively strategic... strategy," says Oliver, laughing, "but, generally, there isn't."

It's quite a task to count up the number of pies he currently has fingers in: there are his restaurants (37 Jamie's Italians at last count, Fifteen, Barbecoa...), his publishing empire (umpteenth books and Jamie magazine), the Jamie At Home cookery range, his Fabulous Feasts catering business, his Fresh One production company... the list goes on and on.

It sounds exhausting, but today Oliver is as fresh-faced as ever and has boundless energy.

It's reflected in his latest venture, Food Tube, a YouTube network dedicated to cooking videos – his organic, interactive alternative to normal food programmes.

Since it launched last year, millions have watched clips – such as Oliver and Kevin Bacon going head to head in an ultimate bacon-sandwich contest – and it's made viral stars of his proteges,

including DJ BBQ, Cupcake Jemma and Kerryann Dunlop, who have all now launched cookbooks under the banner 'Jamie Oliver's Food Tube Presents...'

They're currently all seated in comfy tan leather sofas on a floor of the warehouse that doubles as an office, complete with mood boards and a kitchen/studio for making Food Tube videos.

"These guys smashed it," says Jamie of why he picked the trio to have books published.

“I think Food Tube is the big one for me. If anything, I'm doing less in the next 10 years. I've tried lots of things.”

"I thought 'June, July, barbecue, fantastic'. For comfort food on a budget, Kerryann's just smashing it with the feedback from the audience – they really love her.

"And who could not love Jemma and cakes?"

They make a motley crew: DJ BBQ (aka Christian Stevenson) is an American extreme sports presenter-turned DJ-turned cook;

hard-working Jemma Wilson wowed Jamie at a street party with her cupcake stall; and Kerryann was one of his first apprentices at Fifteen when she was just 17.

"I've never left him alone really. I sort of stuck to him," says the bubbly mum.

Her book, *The Family Cook Book*, is full of scrummy recipes to make for and with kids and her secret weapon is what she calls the "batch" cook – making loads of something to freeze, like fish pie or her versatile Hidden Vegetable Pasta Sauce.

DJ BBQ is so enthusiastic about cooking, it makes your mouth water. He's adamant we should be barbecuing year-round, not just in summer.

"It's the original way we all cooked. We cooked on charcoal and on wood, and we shouldn't have stopped because there's flavour in that fuel," he says.

Oliver agrees, saying: "It's only 70 years that we've been cooking on electric and gas.

"For the billion years before that, there's always been a cinder, puffs of smoke – it's a sensory thing.

"If you stand in front of a fire, there's something earthly and connected [about it], not sterile."

Jemma runs a bakery called

Crumbs & Doilies and was there at the start of the 'cupcake revolution'. Having a Food Tube channel is a "dream come true".

"When I was a kid, I always wanted to be a TV presenter and I'd put that to one side to start my bakery, but this means I get to do both things," she says.

"I'm proud of the bakery, but for a time I didn't get to bake for fun. I just used to bake cupcakes.

"Which is great, but sometimes, you just want to make a flapjack, you know?"

As for the Naked Chef himself, is there anything else Oliver's working on – any more plans for world domination?

"Not really. I think Food Tube is the big one for me. If anything, I'm doing less in the next 10 years.

"I've had my very experimental five years and I've learned lots of lessons. I've tried and tested lots of tiny things.

"Most of it has worked and a handful have failed, and that's what it's all about," he says.

"I think the next 15, 20 years is about doing less, being more focused, people, relationships – and having a good laugh."

And putting his feet up a bit? "I don't know about that!"

Eatery fails to bridge the age gap but sun does shine bright for youngsters

Cafe du Soleil

Location: Canterbury

By Chris Thomson

THERE is rarely a better confirmation of quality than a busy, bustling restaurant. After all, if everyone else likes it, it must be good, right?

Well, sort of. Because on a warm early summer Friday night, Cafe du Soleil in Canterbury is packed. In fact they're turning people away at the door.

Inside, the atmosphere is lively, the clientele predominantly a youthful 25-35 audience and all looking like they've dressed up for the occasion.

And the buzz is tangible. Classic Stevie Wonder plays – I'd argue too loudly, but for the audience, probably right – and as a consequence chat volumes go up. Before you know it, the noise is all-encompassing.

In short, if you're 35-plus and looking for a romantic place, this may not be ideal for you. If you want a work outing or catch-up with

friends, you may have found your next night out.

Yet the Cafe du Soleil suffers a little from style over substance. It sits just yards from a car park (bit grim), but it's the car park close to Westgate Towers (breathtaking) and you reach it by walking over a little bridge across the Stour (very pretty).

Inside, the walls are bare brick with big textile murals. The kitchen, open and visible, stretches off to the right when you enter.

Gripe one: the staff are possibly too efficient. While leaving a diner waiting for a prolonged period is a deadly sin of the restaurant trade, you don't want service so swift that the sense of having food cooked to order disappears in the rush.

A drinks order is taken almost the moment we sit down, and our meal requests are taken with no indication to the specials lurking on a board behind a wall of plants that



is planted alongside us.

But then the younger audience probably demands this. For everyone else, there's no sense of that 'good pace' of a meal – instead, it's just a

little, well, rushed.

I'd plumped for 'four ducks' as a starter, a dish featuring duck mousse, rillette, smoked breast and scratchings. It was a rather odd little

dish but not without its charm. It did, however, feel as though it had all been prepared some time before rather than anything being made to order. Still, an acceptable starter.

The main course was a far more satisfying experience. The seared Kentish lamb with fresh thyme and garlic was generous and tasty. Serving it with chips, though, seemed a bit too, what's the phrase, well, a bit more Harvester.

As we rattled on to pudding, we opted for the wood-fired Alaska for two – boasting home-made banana bread, ice cream and meringue. The meringue failed in pretty much all respects. It was gooey rather than crisp, and a bit of a mess.

As we settled the bill – about £75 for the two of us – and drained the remainder of a bottle of Prosecco, there was a strong sense that for the market it aims at, the less demanding diner with youth on their side, Cafe du Soleil no doubt delivers.

For everyone else, however, you can enjoy better food and a far more amiable ambience – and all for a comparable price-tag – nearby.

■ **Cafe du Soleil**
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TEXT IN NOW AND CHAT TO LOCAL PEOPLE. SEND: CHAT2 TO : 80098 (T&C'S BELOW)

FEMALE young 47yrs red hair, blue eyes 4'11 VGSOH adventurous, loves outdoors but also cosy nights in, smoker seeks attractive male. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 441295**

PETITE slim blonde 39yrs, pretty big blue eyes, looking for similar easygoing older male to put a spark back into my life, enjoy nights in/out and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412327**

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. **Tel No: 0905 002 1956 Box 366019**

WIDOW 70, lonely, seeking gent, 70-75 to bring a bit of sparkle back in life, likes theatre, cinema. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412475**

KATIE 26yr old pretty slim blue eyed blonde looking for evening entertainment with open-minded discreet guy, any age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412319**

CHRISTINA, curvy beauty, 27yrs, own home, very very adventurous seeks no strings fun and frolics. Can accommodate and will answer all calls. **Tel No: 0905 002 1957 Box 410127**

JANE 29yr old horsey female, loves the outdoors, cycling, as well as duvet days, WLTm not too serious male for a hopefully normal relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412315**

MARY 5ft 6in size 12 blonde, nice personality, good conversationalist, interesting, lots of interests WLTm likeminded caring, happy male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412169**

SAM, 35yrs, own business, sexy, loves dressing up and married, seeks discreet man for casual meetings. Can travel anywhere. **ACA. Tel No: 0905 002 1949 Box 408297**

CLARE 36yrs successful single mum, independent, employed with OHAC, size 10, green eyes, pretty, likes swimming, family life, seeking male with similar values and interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412053**

LADY 60, size 12, easy going, likes animals, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411301**

SHARON 32yrs and still soul searching for Mr Right, I enjoy keeping in shape, caring for people, seeking loving respectful guy who also knows a good time. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412049**

SUSIE, married, adventurous/dominant lady, 38yrs, seeks discreet man any age/area for no strings fun. **Tel: 0905 002 1945 Box 412285**

SLIM petite, attractive brunette, 56, British/Russian origin, excellent cook/home maker, seeks cultured male for serious relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412129**

FREYA 33 6ft blonde, loves dancing and have a good time, employed, own home, one son, seeking similar laidback guy/daughter for dates, chats and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412045**

MARILYN really nice curvy tactile female, loves romantic walks, cosy nights in, quality times, looking for nice male to spend time and fall in love with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411871**

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JAN 5ft 6ins, dark hair/eyes, nice smile, likes music, travel, countryside, animals, employed, OHAC, looking for companionship with similar lonely heart. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411865**

SARAH 25 petite slim attractive blonde student, enjoys keeping fit, looking good, socialising, going out, being a mum WLTm similar fun genuine guy. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411537**

JULIE attractive outgoing female with a very young attitude, loves running, living life, travel, WLTm someone special to make my life complete, hope you're out there. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411513**

SUSAN seeking nice male, medium build, 35, easygoing, likes music, nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406779**

WOULD you like to bounce into spring with me and onwards? Widow late 60's, enjoy most things in life, looking for someone to enjoy them with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411395**

LINDA 37, green eyes, attractive, bubbly size 12, enjoys cosy nights in, text chats, seeking tallish fun guy for meals out, pubs, clubs and spending quality times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411033**

CAROLINE 39yr old pretty blonde looking for handsome caring man to put the sparkle back into my life and make each other feel special. **Call me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411891**

34YR old sick of being single working mum, OHAC, likes the simple things in life, looking for romantic, honest guy with GSOH for cosy nights in and fun nights out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411887**

CINDY 31 attractive, size 12 brown eyed blonde, new to this but sick of passing up potential soul mate so thought I'd give it a go. **ACA Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411873**

RITA divorced care worker with no ties, 5ft 11ins, dark hair, enjoys meals out, cosy nights in, seeking male 45-55 with GSOH and similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411775**

JANET 5ft 8ins, slim 12, pretty, green eyes, brown hair, seeking male companion for friendship hopefully leading to a relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411689**

MELANIE tall curvy attractive bubbly female who loves meals out, cosy nights in with a nice wine, walking, seeks professional male with outgoing GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411509**

LYN 34yrs, pretty petite dark haired female, loves music, meals out, quiet drinks out, seeking caring male with GSOH who can make me feel special again. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410137**

CAROLINE blonde curvy very active lady who loves to socialise, countryside, seeking similar caring male for LTR and to share good times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409413**

RACHEL 39, brown hair/eyes, 5ft 6ins, bubbly, outgoing, naughty, busty, divorced, seeks male for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410835**

SUE optimistic divorced lady with OHAC, good job, enjoys meals out, cinema, countryside, pub lunches, looking for likeminded outgoing happy male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410467**

CATHY very much a lady seeks gent up to 62yrs who would appreciate an independent professional sassy female who loves to be wooed, dined and romanced. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410301**

JOANNA slim attractive blue eyed blonde nurse, divorced with two teenagers, lots of love to give, looking for Mr Right, call me lets put the spark back. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409097**

WOULD you like to bounce into spring with me and onwards? Widow late 60's, enjoy most things in life, looking for someone to enjoy them with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411395**

MARIE 37yrs slim attractive caring, likes meals in/out, cinema, tennis, keeping fit/active, WLTm fun loving, reliable man for friendship leading to more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411037**

SOPHIE 27yr old nursing assistant with no ties looking for discreet adult fun times with tall attractive guy 35-42yrs. **GSOH essential. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410717**

34YR single mum of 1 who loves nights out having a good time seeks similar sociable fun guy to enjoy relaxed but extremely fun relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410709**

BUSTY Caribbean lady who loves music, dance and singing, looking for nice older guy for mutual adult no strings fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410305**

BLONDE pretty, long legged, voluptuous, blue eyes, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410585**

SUSAN seeking nice male, medium build, 35, easygoing, likes music, nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406779**

Men Seeking

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BARRY divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412177**

MALE seeking friendship of mature woman, smoker. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412703**

SINGLE young lady, slim-medium build, 24-38 sought by mature male in Canterbury. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697**

MALE 48, looking for fun loving female to enjoy outdoor activities, nights in and meals out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392212**

JAMES young, free and single, please give me a call if interested. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412345**

EX headmaster, tall, dark, seeks adventurous lady, status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412263**

MALE 49, 5ft 10ins, likes cinema, reading, walks, seeks female in the Thanet area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412235**

BESIDE the Pointe. Literate self-possessing, legittime, kindred spirit sought by white male for elevating the bar. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412223**

45YR old male, likes poetry, seeks companion for relationship. Herne Bay area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411993**

PAUL own business, looking for daytime fun with lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411127**

CHIPS on the pier, walks on the beach/countryside, VGSOH, 58yrs old, fit male, seeks female for laughs and love and whatever. **NE Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411725**

MALE 71, 5ft 10ins, medium build, N/S, likes gardening, dogs, seeks female, 65-71 for friendship/companionship or outings. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411587**

MALE 5ft 11ins, good-looking, athletic build, looking for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411477**

DEREK seeking female, 50-60 for company, friendship and have fun together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411433**

MALE 49, attractive, fit, spontaneous, good company, no ties, seeking likeminded lady for the road ahead, nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411309**

RAY 63, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired, seeking no strings discreet meets for adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411147**

WORLD war veteran seeking happy lady with nice conversation in the Kent area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411133**

DAVE 65, retired, N/S, likes gardening, music, meals out, holidays, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410971**

DAVE 62, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired builder, seeks no strings discreet daytime meets for adult fun. **Surrey. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410899**

MALE likes outdoor life, smoker, seeking local female for cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410755**

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611**

DEREK 5ft 11ins, slim-medium build, loving, caring, seeking black lady for possible relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410511**

EARLY 50's single male, smoker, seeking likeminded female for company and to share life. Must have GSOH, like animals, walks, home made food and nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410441**

41YR old male, dark hair, 5ft 11ins, easy going, likes music, guitar, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410411**

BROWN eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377**

PHIL 6ft, clean shaven, blue eyes, smart, likes sports, walks, films, theatre, music, animals, GSOH, seeks female, 40-55 for fun and friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410351**

RETIRE male, fit, active, seeks no strings discreet meet with female, any age and size. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410343**

ADVENTUROUS male, mid 50's, seeks similar lady for fun and mutually enjoyable discreet relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410339**

PROFESSIONAL male, early 40's, fun loving, independent, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere, fun loving female for LTR. **Animals/children welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409745**

TALL black male, 45, likes meals out, good company, romantic, GSOH, light hearted, seeks easy-going female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409621**

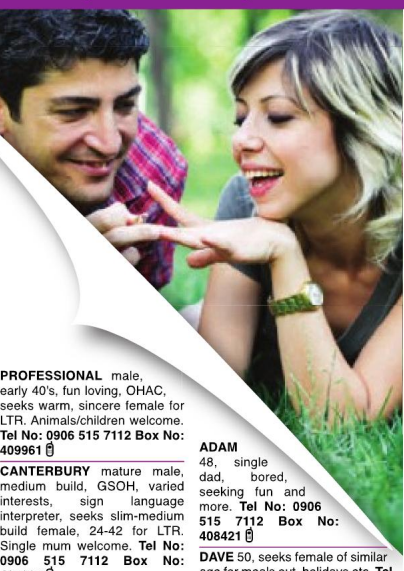
RETIRE male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. **Dover. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409533**

MALE seeking attractive female for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409189**

FIT fellow, full of fun, 58, seeks to find fanciable lady for free and fascinating future for LTR. Find your jar half full. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405857**

CHRIS 52, slim, looking for female, 25-38, 5ft 2ins plus for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408575**

DAVE 50, likes holidays, meals out, socialising, easy going, seeks female 40 plus. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408541**



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PROFESSIONAL male, early 40's, fun loving, independent, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere, fun loving female for LTR. **Animals/children welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409745**

STEVE 6ft 4ins, OHAC, seeking relationship, outdoor type, homey, wanting mutual good relationship with sexy woman. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407835**

ANTHONY 48, athletic, enjoys country walks, seeks youthful female for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407355**

71YR old romantic, 6ft, likes life, socialising, reading, strong tea, dogs, smoker but house trained seeks mature lady needing TLC. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407277**

TALL friendly, very light hearted, single 58, seeks pretty woman for LTR, mutual selection of activities and choosing how to spend our time. **Croydon. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407147**

BLACK male, looking for 1-2-1 relationship with laid back, understanding female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406221**

YOUNG 70 widower, fit, lonely, 5ft 11ins, 11st, likes drives, walks, DIY, meals out, gardening, smoker, looking for lady to spend life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405519**

ADAM 48, single dad, bored, seeking fun and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408421**

DAVE 50, seeks female of similar age for meals out, holidays etc. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408415**

MALE 67, professional, fit, 5ft 10ins, medium build, reliable, tactile, likes most things, seeks slim lady, let's go! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407855**

STEVE 6ft 4ins, OHAC, seeking relationship, outdoor type, homey, wanting mutual good relationship with sexy woman. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407835**

ANTHONY 48, athletic, enjoys country walks, seeks youthful female for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407355**

71YR old romantic, 6ft, likes life, socialising, reading, strong tea, dogs, smoker but house trained seeks mature lady needing TLC. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407277**

TALL friendly, very light hearted, single 58, seeks pretty woman for LTR, mutual selection of activities and choosing how to spend our time. **Croydon. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407147**

BLACK male, looking for 1-2-1 relationship with laid back, understanding female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406221**

YOUNG 70 widower, fit, lonely, 5ft 11ins, 11st, likes drives, walks, DIY, meals out, gardening, smoker, looking for lady to spend life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405519**

CHRIS 52, slim, looking for female, 25-38, 5ft 2ins plus for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408575**

DAVE 50, likes holidays, meals out, socialising, easy going, seeks female 40 plus. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408541**

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Our rights have been given away

MR Clandillon-Baker (Letters 08.06) is right that fracking will not just result in a few wells here and there across the south-east.

Whether it's the extraction of shale gas or coal-bed methane, extraction depends on a network of drill heads, each occupying the space required for an Olympic-sized swimming pool and each using vast quantities of water.

The representative of the UK Onshore Operators' Group may like us to think the industry "operates within a regulatory system considered to be the best in the world".

That regulatory system has already been upset by the government's proposals to allow fracking to take place under people's homes or land without the owners' permission.

The need for such permission has been a long-standing principle, but the Conservative-led government is happy to take away our rights to allow business to make profits at the expense of our water supply and our agriculture and landscape.

At present, proposals for extraction are most advanced in east Kent, but licences have been awarded for wide areas of west Kent.

It is Conservative-controlled Kent County Council that will make the decisions for exploration and extraction to go ahead. Perhaps KCC's attitude will change when the Conservative heartlands of Kent are threatened by fracking.

Mike Eddy, Kent County Councillor (Labour, Deal and Walmer)

Government must target clean energy

HOMEOWNERS' rights are threatened by a new Bill announced in the Queen's Speech.

The Government is so determined to force fracking through that it has decided to scrap trespass laws and allow oil and gas companies to run pipelines under private land without seeking the owners' consent.

This flies in the face of public opinion. Seventy-five per cent of us don't want the new fracking law. But rather than listen to people's legitimate concerns over the environmental, health and economic risks of fracking, the government is steamrolling through legislation to deny people any say in what happens to the ground beneath their homes.

Mounting evidence shows fracking will be a disaster for the environment and the economy. Instead of pouring money into a whole new fossil-fuels industry, the Government needs to

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Conversion just isn't on the elite's agenda

IT'S pointless correspondents complaining about issues such as Manston, the concreting over of Kent, HS1 etc while they continue to vote for the very people who ignore their concerns!

Whichever of the 'Buggins turn' parties gets into power, we end up being run by a metropolitan elite who have come from privileged backgrounds, who have never had a proper job, who are unable to relate to the 'common' people.

What's more, they are funded by the rich and powerful, who

provide their directorships, moonlighting jobs and party funds. No wonder they're not listening.

Hopefully, the rise of the smaller parties will return us to a form of democracy, where voters' wishes are considered. Just to keep voting for more of the same in the vain hope the self-serving politicians, deaf to our pleas and blind to our letters, will suddenly have 'Damascene conversions' is quite frankly delusional.

Phil Granger, West Malling

A lawyer gets £300 an hour. An OAP gets £148 to live on for a week.

E Pettinger, Hythe

Why not name the swine, Cllr Hart?

IN his letter (Letters, 01.06), Thanet District Council member Clive Hart used a quote from George Bernard Shaw, who advised "Never wrestle with a pig. You get dirty, and besides, the pig likes it" in part explanation for his decision to resign as council leader.

Was this quote aimed at his fellow councillors in the round, or at the one "hypocritical individual" he did not name?

Thanet council has not enjoyed a favourable press these past years and criticism of the behaviour of some members has been justified. But to liken them to pigs is a step too far.

Cllr Hart's letter would have carried more punch had he named

those whose behaviour he considers swinish rather than resort to insinuation, which is a cheap way of expressing a point of view.

Robert Muir, Westgate on Sea

Scrap PCC and use cash for cops

HAVING watched the Channel 4 programme, Meet the Commissioner, it became very apparent this was another government-funded 'non job'. Ann Barnes has no powers to deal with any of the public's concerns regarding lack of policing in certain areas.

The money saved by scrapping this job, and the army of support staff she has, would keep more operational police officers in the county.

They should also scrap all the PCSOs as they have no power of arrest and instead have a recruiting drive for special constables. These give their time freely for the benefit of the county and can only claim expenses, but they do have the power to arrest people.

Let's see more of them backing up the regular police and disband the PCSOs, who are just over-paid security guards employed by the government to give the public a 'feel-good' factor.

I don't doubt the commissioner's good intentions to help the public, but as an educated person she should have read the small print on the job description and realised that was never in her remit.

Graham Stevens, Faversham

Sleepwalking into a dictatorship?

I READ with interest the analysis of the Euro elections and the projections on to next year's General Election.

These are not taking into account one vital factor: the electoral register is undergoing a radical shake-up – if you want to vote you will have to do so individually and provide your National Insurance number as well as your date of birth.

I take exception to this level of data mining. I have inquired of the Electoral Commission as to why this is happening and it seems that it is to prevent fraud, which in its own words is "unquantifiable".

Not enough people vote as it is, let alone making it harder. If any reader thinks the same, then write or email the commission.

It could not say who instigated this whole thing – it seems as if we are sleepwalking into a dictatorship.

G Crawford, Medway

prioritise investment in energy efficiency and genuinely low or zero carbon energy technologies such as tidal, wind and solar.

Investment in clean energy will mean new green jobs and industries and greater energy security while reducing the risk of dangerous climate change.

Keith Taylor, Green Party MEP for South East England

Lawyers' fat fees paid by our purses

REGARDING the breakdown of law and order, the refusal of lawyers to attend courts because of government cash-flow restrictions and the hold-up of judgements...

It would be eye-opening to readers to learn how much these professionals get paid.

We, the taxpayers, on straitened wages and pensions, pay out of our purses these fat fees.

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles which tie in with our parent company Archant's overall mission statement.

Archant's mission statement is: "We bring together motivated buyers and sellers through the creation of unique and compelling content and community expertise." This is summed up in the strapline 'Inspiring Communities'.

The way KoS will create our unique and compelling content is to follow these 10 principles: **Kent on Sunday will:**

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between

news, comment and advertising.

- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
- 9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
- 10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.



Conyer Creek

by **Alan Blackburn**
from Canterbury

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business

Legal checks as council considers airport move

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

THANET District Council this week confirmed it was seeking independent legal advice as it weighed up the option to serve a compulsory purchase order on Manston Airport.

The Thanet airfield was shut last month after new owner Ann Gloag, who took over the site last October, claimed she was unable to make it work as a commercial operation.

The businesswoman, who made her fortune as co-founder of the Stagecoach travel empire, acquired the site from Infratil for just £1. But efforts to secure passenger and freight contracts collapsed and she, like previous owners before her, found themselves struggling to make it commercially viable.

Despite a number of bids – including a trio from US investment firm RiverOak, the last of which met the £7 million asking price – all were rejected and some 150 staff were made redundant.

There have been subsequent calls for the council to wade in and save



MANSTON: CPO discussions

the airport by serving a compulsory purchase order – a legal function that can allow councils to acquire land without the permission of the owner if it is perceived as being for the greater good of the community.

Now the Labour-led council says it intends to seek independent legal advice, given the extensive costs and liabilities any such move on the site

would involve. A spokesman for the council said: "Officers have also started a procurement process for an independent industry expert to produce an assessment of the viability of the airport itself."

"Before embarking on any compulsory purchase process, the council is required to demonstrate that a future airport at the site is viable."

Meanwhile, new council leader Iris Johnston, who replaced Clive Hart following his resignation, has continued to liaise with the Save Manston Airport group, her most recent meeting being on Thursday.

Cllr Johnston is also to meet Ann Gloag in early July to discuss the future of the airport and to put forward her concerns.

Cllr Johnston said: "A quick decision on something with such significant financial implications would be foolish and is not something I would be willing to risk."

"Officers have assured me that they are doing everything they can to progress this as a priority and we are hopeful that we could receive a report back within a maximum of four months."

Regeneration scheme is a hit

A REGENERATION initiative spearheaded by Ramsgate Town Council has exceeded its targets by 75 per cent after helping to inject £161,000 into the town's economy over the space of 12 months.

Active Ramsgate, a project managed by Explore Kent, is designed to support economic regeneration by promoting the area through its outdoor activities such as walking, cycling and geocaching trails, luring in more than 10,000 people.

Marina success wins MP support

SWALE MP Gordon Henderson has paid tribute to Swale Marina for boosting the local economy by attracting visitors to the area from across Europe.

The 200-berth yachting facility in Conyer is run by father and son team Paul and Simon Smedley, who have invested heavily to make it a success.

The MP said: "It is a superb boating facility."

ISG starts work on £12m upgrade of college's campus

INTERNATIONAL construction services company ISG has secured a £12 million contract to redevelop a site at MidKent College.

The firm will work on the college's centre for higher-level skills in Maidstone.

It is the former building of the University for the Creative Arts in the county town.

Work will see it completely transformed and equipped with state-of-the-art facilities.

Work includes upgrading construction and engineering workshops, art studios and a creative media suite, as well as training kitchens, a restaurant and bar.

Building work has already begun and is due to be complete by July 2015.

MidKent College principal Sue McLeod said: "Having recently invested more than £100 million in our Medway and Maidstone campuses, it was only natural that the centre for higher-level skills would be next to benefit."

"We are dedicated to providing a realistic alternative to university and are confident the courses taught at the centre will help provide the advanced skills many employers are looking for."

The refurbishment of the former UCA building is phase two of the wider redevelopment of the college's Maidstone campus, which has already benefited from just over £20m of investment.

Phase three will involve the building of a new commercial sports centre, also due in 2015, which will be partly staffed by students.

Alan McCarthy-Wyler, managing director of ISG's construction business, said: "Our strong sector-specific credentials and major project capability proved important factors in our appointment and we are now working closely to deliver the latest phase in the redevelopment."

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- 4 On Monday, open up your wallet, take out said voucher, and call this number:

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QUOTE: FR/RF-KOS

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Drinks
Champagne
check-in

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INCLUDED: Escorted throughout
• Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras
• Return rail travel from St Pancras (from Ebbsfleet on request) to Nice
• 1 night hotel B&B in Paris or Lille
• 6 nights in Diano Marina - half board PLUS free drinks 6pm to 11pm every night
• All excursions
• Transfers abroad



QUOTE: PB10-KOS

Champagne
check-in

PARIS, BAYEUX ARROMANCHES & MONT ST MICHEL

Escorted Holiday by Rail
6 days, **£599pp**
Departs 16 October, 2014

EXCURSIONS
INCLUDED

This super holiday begins with an overnight stay in Romantic Paris, including a Seine cruise and a guided tour. Bayeux, our base for the next 4 nights, is home to the famous tapestry, a unique historical document telling the story of William's conquest of England, including the Battle of Hastings. We will also take in the best of Normandy, including Arromanches with its remnants of D-Day's Mulberry harbour, stunning Mont Saint Michel, Deauville and Honfleur.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout
• Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras
• Return rail travel from London St Pancras (from Ebbsfleet on request) to Paris and Intercity to Bayeux
• 1 night hotel B&B in Paris
• 4 nights hotel B&B in Bayeux
• 2 dinners
• All excursions
• Transfers abroad

PARIS & PRIX DE L'ARC DE TRIOMPHE



QUOTE: PP10-KOS

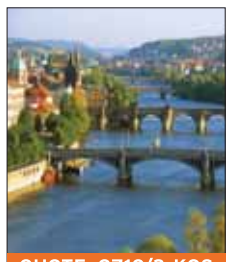
Escorted Holiday by Rail - afternoon departure
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Departs 3 October 2014

CHAMPAGNE
CHECK-IN

The Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe is the flagship event of the European flat-racing calendar, attracting the world's finest thoroughbreds. The event is the wealthiest horse race in Europe with £2,000,000 going to the winner. Our break starts with a glass of bubbly at St Pancras' Champagne Bar before taking the Eurostar to Paris. Our Tour Manager will give you a real Parisienne adventure by metro, taking in Longchamps (race entry included), Notre Dame, Eiffel Tower and Sacre Coeur. We also visit the magnificent Chateau de Versailles (entry included) by coach.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout
• Champagne Check-in at St Pancras
• Return rail travel from St Pancras (from Ebbsfleet on request) to Paris
• 3 nights hotel B&B in Paris
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PRAGUE EXPLORER



QUOTE: CZ10/3-KOS

Holiday by Air from Gatwick
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Departures 16 October, 2014 & 19 March, 2015

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HOTEL

Prague is a magical city of bridges, cathedrals, gold-tipped towers and church domes mirrored in the surface of the swan-filled Vltava River. While the city's medieval centre remains wonderfully preserved, Prague is also a modern and vibrant city full of energy, music, art, culture and fine dining. We stay at the 4-star, Jurys Inn hotel in the heart of the city and include 2 guided city walking tours. There is also an optional visit to the town of Kutna Hora - former financial centre of Bohemia and a UNESCO world heritage site.

INCLUDED: Return flights from Gatwick - supp't may apply
• 4 nights stay at the 4-star Jurys Inn, central Prague
• 4 breakfasts & 2 dinners
• 2 half day, guided sightseeing tours in Prague
• Services of a Tour Manager in Prague
• Return airport-hotel-airport transfers

VENICE CARNIVAL, FLORENCE & CHIANTI



QUOTE: VF2-KOS

Escorted Holiday by Rail
9 days, **£999pp**
Departs 12 February, 2015

EXCURSIONS
INCLUDED

Venice Carnival is spectacular with costume parades, Gondola sailing, streets artists, acrobats and musicians and characters from the Comedia del Arte. The atmosphere is truly electric! We travel by rail from London St Pancras (from Ebbsfleet on request) to Venice with an overnight stop in Turin on the way out and Geneva on the way back. Enjoy 3 nights in Venice, including a guided walking tour and a 2-day waterbus ticket. We continue by rail to the Renaissance city of Florence for a 3 night stay with a guided walking tour and visit to the Chianti region with wine tasting.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout
• Return rail travel from London St Pancras (from Ebbsfleet on request) to Venice, returning from Florence
• Overnight B&B hotel stays outbound and return
• 3 nights B&B in Venice Mestre
• 3 nights B&B in Florence
• 6 dinners • All excursions
• Transfers abroad

FERRARI - LIVE THE DREAM IN MARANELLO



QUOTE: FE10-KOS

Escorted Holiday by Air
4 days, **£499pp**
Departs 16 October, 2014

OPTION
TO DRIVE A
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INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad
• 3 nights B&B sharing a twin/double room at the 4-star Maranello Village Hotel
• Admissions to: The Ferrari Museum, The Enzo Ferrari Museum PLUS guided bus tour inside the Fiorino test-track proving grounds and Viale Enzo Ferrari
• Return Easyjet flights Gatwick to Bologna • Transfers abroad

LAKE BLEĐ & CASTLE CHRISTMAS



QUOTE: BX12-KOS

Escorted Holiday by Air
7 days, half board-plus **£789pp**
Departures 22 December, 2014

EXCURSIONS
INCLUDED

Christmas in Bled, Slovenia, is just magical - framed by the snow-capped peaks of the majestic Julian Alps, Bled is truly a dream festive location. The highlight will be Christmas Day Lunch in Bled Castle, perched atop a cliff 130 metres above the glacial Lake Bled with spellbinding views of the lake, the Karavanke mountains and the Julian Alps. We will also visit Ljubljana, Slovenia's charming capital, tranquil Lake Bohinj & the Mount Vogel cablecar, plus the opportunity to visit the epic Postojna Caves, Europe's most visited (supp't applies).

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad
• Return flights to Venice or Ljubljana with luggage from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply
• 6 nights stay at the 3-star Astoria Hotel in Bled
• 6 breakfasts and 4 buffet dinners + 1 Traditional Slovenian buffet dinner + 1 Candlelit dinner with music & wine
• Christmas day lunch in Bled Castle
• Excursions & Transfers abroad

RIVIERA OF FLOWERS & GARDENS & PORTOFINO



QUOTE: FF6-KOS

Escorted Holiday by Rail - afternoon departure
8 days, semi-all-inclusive **£949pp**
Departs 6 June, 2015

FREE DRINKS
CHAMPAGNE
CHECK-IN

This super floral sojourn starts with a glass of Bubbly at St Pancras' famous Champagne bar before an afternoon departure on Eurostar to Paris or Lille. After an overnight stay we continue by TGV train to Nice then to Diano Marina on Italy's Riviera of Flowers, our base for this holiday. On the Riviera we visit Monaco and its Jardin Exotique, the Villa & Jardins Ephrussi de Rothschild, Hanbury Gardens, Serre de la Madone garden, and Portofino. We also enjoy Free Drinks every night at our hotel.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout
• Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras
• Return rail travel from St Pancras (from Ebbsfleet on request) to Nice
• 1 night hotel B&B in Paris or Lille
• 6 nights in Diano Marina's Piccolo Hotel - half board PLUS free drinks 6pm to 11pm every night
• All excursions & garden entry
• Transfers abroad

Note: Price of Cruises and/or Holidays by Air subject to cabin and/or flight availability at time of booking - supplement may apply

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June 2014

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Bags are not for life
Don't use any old compost
See page 49 »



Spick and lifespan
Science behind right appliance
See pages 50-51 »



It's better by design
Soak up these bathroom tips
See page 54 »

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Report digs the dirt on old compost

Which? magazine's new revelations that old stock is being sold could impact on gardeners, says **Hannah Stephenson**

BAGS of old compost are still being sold in garden centres and DIY stores, with no indication of the date of production on the packaging, according to a report in the latest edition of Which? Gardening, the Consumers' Association magazine.

The report follows up its findings last June that old stock was on sale, which manufacturers said was down to the previous year's poor summer.

Yet the problem is still occurring, with researchers having found old stock of B&Q, Miracle-Gro, J Arthur Bower's and Westland compost being sold again.

Compost doesn't normally have a sell-by or use-by date on it, so consumers may have trouble distinguishing old stock from new.

But how effective is old compost?

Which? Gardening claims that the nutrients in compost can degrade over time, so using a compost that is more than a year or two old could prevent plants from thriving.

Guy Barter, chief horticultural adviser with the RHS, says that certainly organic potting compost deteriorates with time.

"Any organic fertilisers incorporated in the compost will break down over time and the soluble nutrients will become too salty and strong, which could damage the roots of young plants.

"Potting composts have been formulated to have lots of air in them because roots need to breathe, just like humans.

"As the compost ages, the air space declines and roots find it difficult to grow because of lack of air in the compost."

He says non-organic composts are less likely to be affected by age because the nutrients will almost certainly be in the form of chemicals, which aren't broken down so quickly.

Which? Gardening wants

manufacturers to make it easier for consumers to see when the compost they buy was made – for example by printing a production date on the packaging.

When it suggested this to the industry body Growing Media Association (GMA), it said: "GMA members believe they manage stock well. If consumers are dissatisfied with the quality of their compost, they should take it up with the retailer."

David Coop, head of technical development for Westland Horticulture, said: "Ideally, we would advise gardeners to use compost within the season of purchase.

"However, we are confident Westland compost would be stable and consistent the following year if stored correctly and away from direct sunshine. This is because we

If consumers are dissatisfied with the quality of their compost, they should take it up with retailer

use ingredients such as peat and our patented West+ wood fibre in our composts, which are stable, consistent and reliable products, which don't break down quickly."

A spokesman for Sinclair Horticulture, which manufactures J Arthur Bower's compost, said: "Sinclair Horticulture's retail composts are formulated to have a long shelf-life.

"Any deterioration is gradual and the product remains efficacious for at least two years as long as it is stored well [ie fully wrapped].

"We encourage garden centres to rotate their stock, but we have no



ROOT OF PROBLEM: Old compost stock could affect potting and growing of young plants due to a lack of nutrients



control over this. Should the consumer buy discounted older compost, we would advise them to keep an eye on their plants and be prepared to start their fertiliser regime slightly earlier if their plants show signs of nutrient deficiency."

However, Mr Barter notes that it

would be difficult and costly for gardeners to prove that the compost they used had caused the poor performance of plants. They would probably need to employ a specialist company to analyse the compost.

He said: "When you see compost for sale, you assume it will do what it

says on the bag. But if it's been in a retail outlet for a long time, it may have deteriorated."

So, what should we be looking for when buying what we deem to be fresh compost?

"Go to outlets that have a high turnover where there doesn't appear to be old stock," Barter advised.

"If the bags are looking stained or weather-worn, perhaps you should think about shopping elsewhere."

When you open the bag, the contents should feel fluffy and fibrous, not wet and heavy. Compost may seem hard because it's been stacked on a pallet, but it should fluff up pretty easily.

However, it is possible to use old compost as an effective soil-improver when winter digging or just to use as a mulch to conserve moisture and suppress weeds, said Barter, so you could bag a bargain if you see any old stock in the sale.

And if you have a partially-used bag of compost from a previous year, mix it 50:50 with fresh compost and use it to raise young bedding plants or young vegetables, he suggests.

Tasty treats...

Courgettes

IF the weather's been cold and not many fruits have set on your courgette plants, it's time to give them a helping hand by fertilising the flowers.

You can do this by locating a male flower, which does not have a swelling behind it, removing the petals and pushing it into a female flower, which has swelling behind it. The pollen comes in huge quantities, so one flower will pollinate many fruit.



Pottering around...

What to do this week

- Continue to earth up potatoes planted during March and April.
- Remove rhododendron flowers that have passed over so that energy is not wasted in the production of seed.
- Sow seeds of fast-maturing annuals directly into the ground and thin any seedlings sown earlier in the year.
- Sow spring-flowering biennials such as forget-me-nots, sweet williams and wallflowers.
- Complete summer plantings in containers

and water them regularly.

- Pinch out the tips of dahlias to promote bushy plants.
- Tie in new growth of clematis.
- Protect soft fruit from birds by throwing nets over the bushes or by building a fruit cage.
- Plant out hardened-off tender and half-hardy fuchsias into beds, borders and containers.
- Take cuttings of carnations, fuchsias, herbs and many shrubs and perennials to root in the greenhouse.
- Plant out runner beans that have been started off in the greenhouse.



More to choosing a kitchen appliance than meets the eye

Ovens, dishwashers, tumble-dryers... we all have them but do we really take into account what we expect from them?

DID you know you can buy a fridge that costs six pence per day, a dishwasher that only uses six litres of water and a washing machine that can save more than a third on your electricity bill?

When purchasing any appliance for your kitchen you need to really think about what usage it is going to have in its lifetime.

For instance, how many ovens do you need? Do you want a double oven, two singles or even a single oven and microwave combination?

Then there's what type of oven do you want, and how complicated a

model? A lot of this will depend on what you cook as different ovens can be better for different types of cooking.

Have you ever considered a steam oven? It cooks more gently and locks in more vitamins.

By choosing correctly for your lifestyle and checking their energy ratings, you can get a good value appliance.

Companies like Bosch and Siemens offer a vast range of ovens, steam ovens, combination microwaves and microwaves to suit any cook – from novice to cordon bleu.

Cooking on the hob also offers a variety of styles and sizes, from gas

to ceramic or induction, but what is the fastest?

Induction hobs are twice as fast as gas and three times faster than ceramic hobs and tick the box for being most energy-efficient due to their speed of cooking.

All require qualified engineers to install, but there are induction hobs on the market that only need plugging in just like a kettle.

The choice is yours, but have a good look around and see what suits you best.

Of all the household appliances, laundry products are probably the most abused. So do you go for the cheapest option and keep replacing it

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WORKHORSE: Expensive energy-efficient machines can save you money in the long run

when it breaks down or do you purchase a quality machine with a better guarantee and technology that costs less to run than others?

With water meters, do we want a machine that wastes water?

The ActiveWater machines from Bosch calculate the amount of water required for each load and offer a 10-year guarantee on the

washing available with Bosch and Siemens, there are dishwashers in the range of 41 decibels and ones that only use six litres of water in a complete wash.

Extractors now come in all different shapes and sizes and it is a requirement in a new-build that every kitchen has mechanical extraction, so a good extractor is vital in any kitchen and if it can be ducted out that is the most efficient method.

Extractors don't come with charcoal filters as standard as they are very inefficient, so whatever type of extractor you choose see if it can be ducted out.

Refrigeration is available in many sizes and combinations, but a fridge-freezer is plugged in for 24 hours a day, seven days a week, so make sure that you buy one with a good energy rating.

Bosch has fridge-freezers with an A+++ energy rating, meaning it is energy-efficient and will cost about £27 per year to run.

So when you are buying appliances, consider that cheapest is not always the best and weigh up the energy and running costs before you make your decision.

■ Bosch and Siemens appliances are available at MBK Design Studio, Coxheath, Maidstone (website www.m-b-k.co.uk)

Of all household appliances, laundry products are probably the most abused. So do you go for the cheapest option or purchase a quality machine?

EcoSilence Drive. Also, as time is money, reducing a machine's cycle speed by up to 60 per cent saves energy.

Tumble-dryers are usually quite expensive to run; however, Bosch has a tumble-dryer that has an A energy rating and costs about 25 pence per drying cycle.

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Clematis and roses: a match that's simply heaven-scent

Hannah Stephenson gives her reasons why this combination is simply perfect

THERE are some combinations that make life feel better: strawberries and cream, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, gin and tonic... but for me, one of the classic combinations that will always bring a heavenly note to summer is the pairing of clematis and roses.

They not only complement each other colour-wise, the rich blues and purples of the clematis contrasting beautifully with the colour palette of the rose, but they also enjoy similar growing conditions as both need a rich, fertile soil, regular feeding with fertilisers high in potash and nitrogen and plenty of watering during the growing season.

Early season clematis, such as C alpina and C macropetala, with their bushy habits, are naturally suited to training up and masking the bare stems of climbing and rambler roses.

Among the favourite combinations in my garden is the David Austin English rose, Rosa 'Gertrude Jekyll', which produces beautiful, blousy deep pink fragrant blooms in summer and the Clematis 'Nelly Moser', a soft pink-and-white-candy-striped hybrid that twines itself around the rose during the summer months.

Clematis can cling gently to other plants by twining their leaf stalks around other stems or supports and will not strangle a rose through which they are growing.

When choosing a combination, the easiest option is to go for clematis that flower on the current season's growth as these bloom in late summer and autumn and are pruned in late winter to early spring, at the same time as roses.

Some large-flowering clematis bloom in late spring and early summer on wood produced the previous year. These can be grown through roses, but you need to prune them when their first flowers have faded, which you can do while you're dead-heading the rose.

Early to midsummer-flowering types, including C 'Lasurstern' and C 'Marie Boisselot', benefit from being thinned to five or six shoots before they are tied into a rose. Fewer flowers may result, but these will be larger and more evenly spaced, resulting in a more balanced display.

Effective contrasts include the mauve Clematis 'Prince Charles' with the soft yellow rose 'The Pilgrim'. The clematis has fairly small blooms and suits the shorter habit of the rose. Clematis 'Arctic Queen', with its bold white flowers, sets off the delicate pink of Rosa 'Cornelia'.

If you have a larger area to cover such as an archway or pergola, climbers are ideal for providing a living curtain of colour.

The white blooms of the Rosa 'Climbing Iceberg' combine

Clematis cling gently to other plants and will not strangle a rose they are growing through

beautifully with the deep mauve blooms of Clematis 'Lasurstern', which will train over an arch to create both a visual showstopper and a fragrance sensation.

Alternatively, Clematis 'Romantika' drips with inky-purple flowers and makes a perfect companion for a pale climbing rose.

Some combinations work fantastically well in pots, especially on obelisks, which give their growth plenty of support, but you'll need a really large pot because a climbing rose can make a lot of growth.

Try matching Rosa 'Snow Goose', a small repeat-flowering rambler with fragrant pompom white petals, with C 'The President', which bears deep purple flowers from late spring to early autumn.



ENTWINED: The rich colours of the clematis complement your rose bush

Best of the bunch



Dicentra

THESE elegant perennials with fern-like foliage and heart-shaped flowers make a great addition to the border, combining well with low-growing plants such as mossy saxifrages and hellebores, hostas and hardy geraniums.

The smaller types can be grown with astilbes, foxgloves and taller campanulas. They are easy plants to grow, tolerating sun or shade and most soils, but do best in sheltered spots in partial shade and a moist soil.

If you keep them out of the midday sun and in moist ground, the flowering period should last longer.

Good varieties include D spectabilis, a tall variety growing to 90cm and producing arching sprays of pink flowers. More compact dicentras include 'Snowflakes', which grows to only 40-45cm and produces clusters of white flowers. Alternatively, go for the more dramatic 'Bacchanal', the darkest red dicentra.

Pottering around...

What to do this week

- Plant out summer bedding in borders and containers
- Train wall climbers by tying new growth into trellis and supports
- Sow endive, swede, beetroot, carrots, kohlrabi, Chinese cabbage and cauliflower for a late harvest
- Tie the cordons of tomatoes to thick stakes standing at least 90cm tall and train them up as a single stem, removing side shoots
- Treat early infestations of aphids such as greenfly with a soap-based spray.

Chelsea leads the way... but sometimes it's a path best not taken

WILD-FLOWER planting, an abundance of hardy perennial favourites and beautifully structured trees were among the highlights of this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show, along with a number of tributes marking the centenary of the start of the First World War.

Star plants included astrantias, lupins, anthriscus (cow parsley), irises and verbasiums and shades of cream, white and a variety of mauves and blues dominated.

Andy McIndoe, managing director of

multi-award-winning Hillier nurseries, who celebrated Hillier's 150th anniversary at the world-famous show, said: "Everybody talks about trends at Chelsea, but it will always be limited by what is performing at that moment."

"When I look at show gardens, I'm also thinking 'What will this look like in the middle of winter or in autumn?'"

"What we saw in the show gardens was a much better use of structure, less based on just lovely perennials and the light and airy."

Whether any of these elements would be easy to replicate at home is another matter.

"We're still seeing the knock-on effect from the inspiration of the Olympic meadows – the naturalistic garden. Great, but you have to think about maintenance and how it's going to work in your garden."

"People always think meadow-planting is easy and low-maintenance – it isn't. You have to use the right things for your soil type and manage it, or it doesn't work," he said.

Designers made good use of space in this year's show gardens as well as depth of planting area, so there appears to be fewer planting areas, but they are deeper.

"The big trend over the last few years at Chelsea has been better use of trees," said McIndoe. "Some of the plants we've seen this year are easy to grow – astrantias are dead easy, while verbasiums have to be well drained. But don't plant anthriscus if you have rabbits – they go crazy for it."

It's not all just wash and go when picking your new bathroom

A SURVEY commissioned by bathroom product brand iflo has revealed that style is the most important factor for homeowners planning a dream bathroom, with considerations around whether their new sink, toilet, bath or shower is practical or high-enough quality often overlooked.

With more than 60 per cent of respondents in southern England stating they wouldn't ask a plumber for advice when selecting bathroom products, iflo is keen to warn that decisions based purely on aesthetics are behind the most common bathroom snags such as taps that suffer from a lack of pressure, showers that are water-inefficient or toilets that don't flush effectively.

Fortunately, there are trusted brands out there to provide bathroom products that are stylish and

guarantee performance but also keep the plumber in mind by being readily available and easy to install.

Jo Axtell, head of brand for iflo, said: "Bathrooms are the most complicated room in any house.

"It's not just about choosing a look or style but the existing pipework, available space, water usage and water pressure, which can all impact on how successful the room is.

"Unfortunately, many people don't realise this until they have a new shower that isn't powerful enough or taps that look great but are difficult to turn off with wet hands.

"I agree with the survey respondents that it's simple to choose a toilet or bath, but this doesn't take into account the other important considerations."

To help homeowners combine quality, functionality and aesthetics,

the iflo team has produced some top tips for creating a dream bathroom:

1 Don't go it alone

The survey indicated that an online search is most people's first port of call when looking to purchase sinks, toilets, baths or showers.

Don't underestimate the value of professional advice.

Branches of Travis Perkins and City Plumbing Supplies (which stock iflo) often feature bathroom showrooms that give you the freedom to select or browse different styles but with a dedicated team on hand to advise on the quality and practicalities of each item.

2 Choosing a toilet, sink, bath or shower isn't just about taste

The overwhelming survey response



DECISIONS, DECISIONS: Think carefully choosing fixtures and fittings

was that homeowners chose bathroom products alone as they believed plumbers were unable to advise them on current trends and styles and that it was easy to make a purely aesthetic decision.

However, as some respondents testified, there may be factors you are not aware of that could mean a difficult installation or reduced product performance.

Using a trusted bathroom product brand will mean you can go with the style you love, have the reassurance that your plumber will be happy installing it and you will

have the bathroom of which you have always dreamed.

3 Bring in the experts

With 550 of the survey respondents saying they wouldn't consult a plumber, the message is to consider the huge benefits the expertise of a plumber can bring to a project, which for many is a huge investment.

By combining trusted bathroom products with a plumbing professional, you will end up with a great finish, which will deliver a great performance for years to come.

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Models shown: DS3 VTI 120 manual DStyle Plus inc. Ruby Red metallic paint at extra cost £495/DS3 Cabrio VTI 120 manual DStyle Plus/Citroën DS4 THP 200 6-speed manual DSport/Citroën DS5 Hybrid4 200 Airdream DSport. Elect 4 rentals apply to shown models respectively as follows-Initial rental £3,667/31/£4,247/51/£8,362/80/£12,434/38; 46 monthly rentals of £219/£239/£249/£339; optional final rental £5,445/£6,459/£6,445/£9,760. *Prices & offers apply to retail sales of qualifying Citroën models ordered & delivered 01/04-30/06/14 & include VAT, delivery to dealer & number plates. Government Registration Fee & 12 months' graduated vehicle excise duty. Black/metallic/pearlescent/Sport Yellow/Sport Red paint optional at extra cost. Elect 4 Personal Lease rentals shown apply to the following models respectively: Citroën DS3 VTI 120 manual DStyle, Citroën DS3 Cabrio VTI 120 manual DStyle, Citroën DS4 e-HDi 115 Airdream 6-speed manual DStyle & Citroën DS5 e-HDi 115 Airdream ETG6 DStyle & require an advance rental of £2655, £3796, £3796 & £3796 followed by 46 monthly rentals & an optional final rental of £5721, £6772, £6056 & £7716. Excess mileage charges may apply if the agreed annual mileage is exceeded. Payment of the optional final rental extends the rental term (this does not transfer title of the vehicle) & requires an annual rental equivalent to one month's rental. Finance subject to status. Written quotations available on request from Citroën Financial Services, Quadrant House, Princess Way, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1QA, UK. Over 18s only. A guarantee may be required. Offers, prices & specification correct at time of going to press from participating Dealers. Terms & conditions apply. Please ask us for details. Finance offers apply to UK only.

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By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

Preview

Citroën C1

Price: £8,245

Driving appeal (predicted):

★★★★

Image: ★★★★★

Space: ★★★

Value: ★★★★★

Running costs: ★★★★★

How green?: ★★★★★

Best rival: VW Up

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CITY CHIC: It is hoped the French marque's new C1 will stand out from the city car crowd with its funky styling, value and scope for personalisation

Will Citroënistas love C1?

Citroën has high hopes for its funky new C1 city car, which will offer buyers a stylish roll-back roof as well as a wealth of chances for personalisation

CITROËN'S all-new C1 city car arrives in July, with two sets of rivals – official and unofficial.

The most notable official ones are the VW group's clone troupe – the VW Up, SEAT Mii and Skoda Citigo – launched in 2012.

These impress by being pleasant to drive in town, or on a run, and through efficiency of interior space management.

Other obvious rivals are the latest Hyundai i10 – a great-looking small car and very grown up in its quality and refinement – and Korean sister brand Kia's Picanto.

But it would be naive to assume that Citroën and its dealers won't also have an eye on the rival charms of the C1's spiritual sisters, the Peugeot 108 and Toyota Aygo.

This is the second time these three brands have teamed up to clone a new city car and the obvious inspiration behind the VW trio.

Why do it? Well, small cars mean small profit margins, yet development and production costs can be just as expensive as for a larger car, so the pooling of resources and economy of scale from cloning/crowd funding have obvious benefits.

Where will the C1 (from £8,245) hope to gain an edge?

Well, Citroën has a reputation for being a bit funkier than its French sister brand Peugeot, and definitely more so than Toyota, so the C1 will have great cachet with young buyers and confirmed 'Citroënistas'.



The car has slick front ends with innovative lighting arrays and a hint of the looks that have made Citroën's upmarket DS3 supermini such a hit.

Citroën is also making much of the roll-back roof Airscape (geddit?) models (from £10,345), which undercut the cheapest version of the popular Fiat 500C convertible by almost three grand.

But the cloning exercise means that there's then not much blue water between the C1 and its sisters.

It will sell in three trim levels: Touch, Feel and Flair, with the Airscape versions offered only in Feel or Flair.

Available with three and five doors and only with a choice of two petrol engines, the entry model is the £8,245 C1 Touch VTi 68bhp manual three-door, while the range is headed by the £11,785 Airscape Flair VTi 68bhp five-door, five-speed clutchless Efficient Tronic Gearbox (ETG) auto – what a mouthful.

Those who want more power can opt for the 82bhp petrol versions (from £10,535).

Within this fairly confined line-up,



though, Citroën is playing the customisation card for all its worth, knowing that small-car-buyers love to personalise their vehicles.

So, there will be eight body colours to choose from – including four metallics – three wheel designs and four interior upholstery finishes?

The fabric roof on Airscape models will also be available in black, grey and red – and it's a fair bet that there will be even more choice on that front later.

Those who have an eye on the environment might also consider the greener Airdream versions (from £10,435) fitted with start/stop systems, although all C1s are below the 100g/km of CO₂ benchmark at which road tax is payable.

Standard C1 kit includes remote central locking, electric front windows, six airbags, MP3-compatible sound system, USB socket and LED daytime running lights, but trading up by £1,200 adds air-con, digital radio, seven-inch Touch Drive screen interface with steering-mounted controls, plus body-coloured door mirrors and door handles.



Other view...

the Petrolhead

Heaven save us from gutless and tiddly Noddy cars. And like disasters they seem to come along in threes. I hate it

She says

I suppose I'm asking to be stereotyped here, but the C1 is impossibly cute. It's much more grown up than the old car though

the Eco-warrior

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Specials mark tour

SKODA is marking the three UK stages of this year's Tour de France with limited editions of its Yeti (£23,490 and pictured), Octavia (£24,290) and Superb (£28,490) models.

The Czech brand's links with cycling dates back 119 years, when it began making pedal-powered two-wheelers; nowadays it is a respected global partner to the sport and each limited edition comes with 'le Tour de France' badges, waterproof seat covers and bike-wheel bags.



Aygo now a lot less

TOYOTA says its new-generation Toyota Aygo city car goes on sale from July 1 for as little as £7,995 – a £600 discount on list price.

The little car's appeal is further boosted by 10 interchangeable exterior and cabin customisation options that make it funkier than its closely-related sisters, the new Peugeot 108 and Citroën C1, plus 'big car features' such as the all-new Toyota x-touch multimedia and x-nav systems.



Jeep's sales climb

PROOF of Jeep's resurgence under Fiat ownership has come from yet another monthly registration rise.

The legendary 4x4 manufacturer registered 279 sales in May, the ninth consecutive monthly sales climb and up 218 per cent against the same period last year.

Volume was dominated by its largest model, the Grand Cherokee (pictured), and is set to climb still higher as the newly-launched and smaller Cherokee begins to arrive.

STYLE AND SUBSTANCE: SEAT's Leon ST is roomy, well made and fun to drive. It has the looks and the dynamics to woo drivers back from small MPVs.

A very happy marriage of form and function

Rarely does an estate car blend style and practicality well, but SEAT has nailed it with the new Leon ST, says **Steve Loader**

SALES are booming and SEAT is now on track to become as big a success as VW group sister brand Skoda.

But there has been much stumbling to find the right route: the ill-fated Altea Freetrack 4x4, clashing with SEAT's stated intention to be the group's sporting brand; the previous Toledo – a strange-booted MPV; and allowing the Altea MPV to soldier on for 10 years with no sign of replacement. But the Spanish marque's output now shows a surer touch, highlighted by the broadening of the Leon range.

Previously only ever sold as a five-door family hatchback, the new Leon has gained a racy three-door SC coupé version and, arguably the sector's finest-looking estate, the ST (from £16,675).

It's one of those rare cars that looks as good in the metal as it does in pictures and drives as well, too, but the biggest bonus of all, literally, is a 587-litre boot and 1,470-litre load space with seats down,

making it one of the roomiest estates in its class.

The ST also chimes with a definite trend towards compact estates as keen drivers gravitate back to tidier cornering and handling after experimenting with small MPVs that, for all their practicality, lack style and driving pleasure.

It's an easy decision to make, too, with SEAT charging just £825 more for an ST versus its equivalent five-door Leon hatch, itself something of a bargain when you consider that this whole Leon line-up is based on the latest-and-greatest-generation VW Golf.

That said, the ST test car was one of the dearer versions in the line-up: a 150PS (148bhp) two-litre diesel in sporty FR trim and featuring the VW group's clever DSG twin-clutch automatic gearbox, which really can be driven as a manual if you wish.

All of that comes to £23,640, with the DSG alone adding £1,250. It's still good value, but check out the small turbocharged 1.4-litre petrol STs, too. This lightweight yet powerful engine, available in 105 and 140PS (103 and 138bhp

respectively) outputs is well proven in other VW group models and far cheaper to buy than diesel equivalents, for which you will need to cover many more miles to claw back the price difference via savings at the fuel pumps.

Whichever powertrain you opt for, though, the ST shuns the radical styling of the previous Leon in favour of classier looks highlighted by sharply-creased flanks that lower and lengthen the car in the viewer's eye, an illusion reinforced by the roof rails – fitted as standard.

The cabin is smart, well made and practical, with lots of stowage – quite different to the old car's slightly barren look – and there is an excellent infotainment touchscreen.

On a practical note, there are handles in the boot that allow each rear seat to fold flat with one pull, and a low loading sill with a 'secret' underfloor compartment for extra stowage.

A ski-slot or through-hatch allows loading of long, thin items, while buyers can choose an optional fold-down front passenger seat for even greater load-lugging.

But all of this pales against the fact that a good, well-priced load lugger comes stuffed with such style and verve.

Like its hatchback sister, the ST offers good ride quality but stiff and composed cornering ability, and our 150PS diesel model proved lively (0-62mph in 8.6 seconds) yet delivered this performance with great refinement, claiming 62.8mpg on the official combined cycle.

However, the 140PS 1.4-litre petrol FR model offers 8.4 seconds and 53.3mpg respectively yet costs £3,250 less – so you see my earlier point.



SEAT LEON ST FR 2.0TDI 150PS DSG

Price:	£23,640
Driving appeal:	★★★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
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Contact Alison Bushell on 01635 517013 or apply online www.dmsarrearsolutions.co.uk

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Career opportunities at MidKent College

Full Time Art & Design and .5 Graphic Design lecturers required

Two dynamic and well-established tutors in Art and Design and Graphics are required to teach within a busy department at MidKent College (Medway).

The ideal candidates should hold a teaching qualification and have experience with BTEC and vocational qualifications at levels 2 and 3.

Art and Design candidates should be able to demonstrate skills in a variety of areas including painting, drawing, printmaking, textiles and sculpting.

Graphic candidates should be fully conversant with Adobe Creative Suite and show a significant industry background.

The department has excellent resources with fully-equipped art studios and Mac suites enabling students to access industry standard equipment to support their studies.

To request and application pack please e-mail **job.applications@midkent.ac.uk** Closes 27/06/14
Salary up to £26,398 depending on qualifications and experience.



LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

LICENSING ACT 2003:

Application for Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that

a) William Ben Jeanes and Karen Elaine Sunshine have applied to Ashford Borough Council for the GRANT OF PREMISES LICENCE for

b) The sale of alcohol, live and recorded music, 09:00 to 23:00, seven days a week for the premises
c) The Dog House

situated at d) Evegate Centre, Smeeth, TN25 6SX

A register of licensing applications can be viewed at the Licensing Section, Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL 01233 330721 by appointment

Any person wishing to submit representations to this application must give notice in writing to the address shown above, giving in detail the grounds of objection by:

e) 9th July 2014.



Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

The continuing growth of our business has resulted in vacancy for the following staff

Physiotherapy Manager – Margate

Full time Hours: 37.5 per week Closing date: 20/06/2014
Salary: £45,675.00 per annum

Qualifications

- Maths and English GCSE A-C or equivalent
- Current Registration with Health Professional Council.
- Minimum of 3 years experience in a similar post.
- Clinical leadership and motivating skills for staff and patients

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact: Mary Guarnieri, Matron on 01843 234252

For a job description and application form please visit www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers

Alternatively, please contact Jo Wright, Senior HR Assistant
Telephone: 01304 245961
E-mail: joanne.wright@spencerhospitals.com

Spencer Private Hospital is an equal opportunity employer.
This position is subject to a Disclosure and Barring check.



Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

The continuing growth of our business has resulted in vacancies for the following staff:

HR Assistant – Dover (6 months temp.)

Full time Hours: 37.5 per week Closing date: 20/06/2014
Salary: £20,295.49 per annum

Qualifications

- Maths and English GCSE A-C or equivalent
- CIPD Qualification
- 2 years experience working in a HR environment

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact: Mandy Oliver, 01304 245946

For a job description and application form please visit www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers

Alternatively, please contact Jo Wright, Senior HR Assistant
Telephone: 01304 245961
E-mail: joanne.wright@spencerhospitals.com

Spencer Private Hospital is an equal opportunity employer.
This position is subject to a Disclosure and Barring check.



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or email: employment@archant.co.uk



Kent on Sunday **KENT LIFE**

AUCTION SALE 24th June 2014



By order of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Land at Fuggles Close, Paddock Wood, TN12

- Land of approximately 0.164 acres with planning potential (Subject to consents)
- Guide £140,000

Land at Cherryfields, Benenden, TN17

- Land of approximately 0.04 acres
- Guide £2,000

Please call 0208 741 8088
www.barnardmarcusauctions.co.uk

MARINE AND COASTAL ACCESS ACT 2009 APPLICATION FOR PLACEMENT OF ROCK REVETMENT

Notice is hereby given that NETWORK RAIL (HIGH SPEED) has applied to the Marine Management Organisation under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, Part 4, for a marine licence to undertake place rock revetment at the piers of Medway viaduct. Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Vincent Jasper, Information Centre, Community Hub Rochester, East Gate, High Street, ME1 1EW. Copies of the Application and associated information may be viewed on line in the Public Register at www.marinemangement.org.uk/publicregister. Representations or objections in respect of the application should be made in writing, giving an address to which correspondence relating to the representation or objection may be sent, to the Marine Management Organisation, Lancaster House, Hampshire Court, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7YH, or alternatively emailed to de.ellen@marinemangement.org.uk, within 28 days of Week ending 15th June 2014, quoting reference MLA/2014/00223.

The Marine Management Organisation will pass to the applicant a copy of any objection or representation we receive.

Where to find more information: Vincent Jasper, Information Centre, Community Hub Rochester, East Gate, High Street, ME1 1EW

Date that first notice was published: Week Ending 15th June 2014

kentnews.co.uk kent-life.co.uk

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Pickerings Plant Ltd of Ashby Road, Measham Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE12 7JW is applying for a licence to use Unit 2, New Hythe Business Park, New Hythe, Aylesford M20 7SX as an operating centre for 6 goods vehicles and 2 trailers.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

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LICENSING ACT 2003

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR THE VARIATION OF A PREMISES LICENCE

Notice is hereby given that RAJENDRAN RAVICHANDRAN Of 18 ST DUNSTAN'S STREET, CANTERBURY has applied to Canterbury City Council for the VARIATION of a PREMISES LICENCE to permit the provision of Late night refreshment daily from 23.00Hrs to 24.00 and to vary the hours for the sale of alcohol from 06.00 to 20.00 every day to ... 07.00 to 24.00 every day for the premises CANTERBURY WINE MART situated at 18 ST DUNSTAN'S STREET, CANTERBURY CT2 8AF

A register of licensing applications can be inspected at <http://www.canterbury.gov.uk/licensing> or at Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1YW, tel.01227 862000, by appointment with the Licensing Team between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday.

Any person wishing to submit relevant representations to my/our application must give notice in writing to the address shown above, giving in detail the grounds of objection by 05/07/2014.

Dated this 6th day of June 2014

Signed Glen Lake

The Council will not entertain representations where the writer requests that his identity remains anonymous. Copies of all representations will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Panel and will therefore pass into the public domain. Representations must relate to one or more of the four Licensing Objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm.

In the case of an application for a provisional statement, please note that representations will be restricted once a statement has been issued.

It is an offence liable on conviction to a fine up to Level 5 on the standard scale under Section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003 to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with this application.

Maidstone Borough Council NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A NEW PREMISES LICENCE

Notice is hereby given that application has been made by ENGARSAL SINNARASA to Maidstone Borough Council for a new premises licence in respect of, Bearsted News, 1 Yeoman Court 141 Ashford Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 4ND.

For the sale of alcohol, off the Premises during the following hours: 06:00 to 23:00- Monday to Sunday.

Any person wishing to make representations about the proposals outlined above can do so in writing to The Licensing Partnership PO Box 182 Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1G Email: licensing@maidstone.gov.uk by 09/07/2014

Any person wishing to inspect the Licensing Register may do so at the above address during normal working hours. It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and on summary conviction would be liable to a fine not exceeding £5000.

PLANNING

Town and Country Planning Acts

The Council is required to give notice of the following applications

14/00271/FULL OS Plot 8200 Badsell Road, Capel

- Development of 22.3ha solar photovoltaic park on land 120m south of village, with attendant equipment and infrastructure (MAJOR) (DEVPLN)

14/00870/FULL OS Plots 0072 6400 4568 Off Sherenden Road, Capel

- Solar park for generation of low carbon renewable electricity to the local distribution network (MAJOR) (DEVPLN)

14/01620/FULL Duke Of York 17 The Pantiles, Pantiles & St Marks

- Increase external seating covers from 48 No. to 68 No (LB) (CA)

14/01621/LBC Duke Of York 17 The Pantiles, Pantiles & St Marks

- Listed Building Consent - Increase external seating covers from 48 No. to 68 No (LB) (DEVPLN) Departure from the Development Plan (PROW) Affecting A Public Right of way (CA) Affecting a Conservation Area (LB) Affecting a Listed Building (MAJOR) Major Applications (MAST) Mast Applications (EIA) Applications Accompanied by an EIA Statement.

You may view these applications on our website (www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk), at The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook or at Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. We accept comments online, by email to planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk or in writing to the address below. Comments should be made within 21 days from the date of this notice, although we may accept them after this date.

You should quote the reference and be aware that we make all comments available for inspection, placing them on the file and publishing them on the internet. We do not publish signatures, telephone numbers or email addresses on the internet.

James Freeman
Head of Planning Services, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS

Dated: 14 June 2014



GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

Probulk (Haulage) Ltd of Little Aneley Farmhouse, Glassenbury Road, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2QJ is applying for a licence to use Compound 1, Nuralite Ind Est, Canel Road, Higham, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7JAA as an operating centre for 5 goods vehicles and 4 trailers. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

NOTICE OF INTENDED LAND DISPOSAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 SECTION 123 (2A)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council intends to dispose of the freehold interest in two areas of land, which are for identification purposes described in the schedule to this notice.

This notice is given in so far as the areas of land consist of or form part of open space within the meaning of the above Section.

Plans of the land are available to view at the Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2AB or at the Weald Information Centre, The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook TN17 3HF.

Objections to the proposed disposals must be made in writing to the Legal Services Manager, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS by no later than 20th June 2014.

SCHEDULE

Land to the rear of 42-48 Fuggles Close, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent (approximately 0.066 hectares)

Land at Cherryfields, Benenden, Cranbrook, Tunbridge Wells, Kent (approximately 0.016 hectares)

Paul Cummins, Legal Services Manager
Dated June 2014



PLANNING



THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

Y14/0635/SH - Great Dowles Farm House Stone Street Stelling Minnis Canterbury Kent - Erection of a grain store/general purpose building.

Y14/0677/SH - Little Holt Farm Elmsted Ashford Kent TN25 5JY - Erection of a single storey extension

Y14/0641/SH - 20 Radnor Cliff Folkestone Kent CT20 2JJ - Erection of a replacement detached garage with games room/ storage above.

Y14/0654/SH - 61 Sandgate High Street Sandgate Kent CT20 3AH - Listed building consent for the installation of a rear door and minor internal alterations.

Y14/0653/SH - 61 Sandgate High Street Sandgate Kent CT20 3AH - Change of use of part of ground floor to Cafe (Class A3), together with external alterations.

Y14/0675/SH+ - Royal Oak Motel Ashford Road Newingreen Kent CT21 4JB - Listed Building Consent to demolish a chimney

Y14/0420/SH - Assembly Rooms Church Approach New Romney Kent TN28 8AS - Felling of a Rowan tree in a conservation area.

Y14/0655/SH - Land opposite Westmead Stone Street Westenhanger Kent - Temporary use of land for car parking in connection with The War and Peace Shows at Folkestone Racecourse.

Y14/0584/SH - 136 Sandgate Road Folkestone Kent CT20 2BY - Installation of replacement uPVC windows to ground floor (resubmission of planning application Y13/1042/SH).

Any representations should be made in writing to the Head of Planning, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY or emailed to planning@shepway.gov.uk. Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. It should be noted that any representations received will be made available for public inspection.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

- The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

+ - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

Applications can be viewed and comments made online at <http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

The applications marked (*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

C Lewis, Head of Planning
Shepway District Council



DO AVOID THE BUNKERS : The course at Tudor Park was designed by Donald Steel, one of the county's leading golf architects. The complex at Bearsted also includes a hotel, gym and spa.

Warm welcome awaits old hand

The Tudor Park Marriott Hotel & Country Club at Bearsted has a clear intention to develop the game

DEPENDING on your viewpoint, golf has an image problem or it has the best image of any sport in the world.

Either way, it is undeniable that golf does carry the 'elitist' tag and accordingly some people will be put off even trying their hand at it, while others will be attracted by the perceived cachet of joining the most expensive club in town.

It is an issue being addressed by the Tudor Park Marriott Hotel & Country Club at Bearsted, near Maidstone, where 26 years of golf have established the venue as one of the most prestigious in the county.

On the sunny day that I visited, TV weather girl Kaddy Lee-Preston was heading to lunch with a group who had been out on the course enjoying (hopefully!) a ladies' taster day.

Although about a fifth of Tudor Park's members are ladies, Fraser Liston, director of golf, is swift to acknowledge the potential issues.

"For women, it can be quite intimidating going into a golf club – it is male-dominated, there's no question.

"Although 20 per cent or so of our members are ladies, we're trying to get more to join. We're trying to reach all levels and areas of society."

Liston's pedigree is impressive and he made the long journey south from Fairmont St Andrews, a five-star resort close to the Scottish town of St Andrews, widely promoted as the home of golf.

Citing "career progression and the lure of working for Marriott" as the driving force for his move, he certainly appears to have no regrets.

"It's a varied job, but I enjoy it," he said. "It's massively different here and so much more than a normal golf club – people who join us aren't just members of one of the most high-profile venues in Kent, they're also a member of Marriott's other venues.

"And they get to use all the facilities such as the hotel, gym and spa."

There are some 450 members at

Tudor Park and you wonder if some might view the 18-hole course – which was designed by Donald Steele, one of the country's leading golf architects – as just an optional extra given everything else that is on offer, but Liston says most are already golfers by the time they join up.

"What we're trying to do is grow the game of golf," he said. "For exam-

“ Golf is an ageing game – that's one of its challenges. Tiger Woods brought more young people in, but we have to keep momentum going. ”

Fraser Liston,
on attracting younger players

ple, we ran a competition in which the top five finishers won golf scholarships here. It's developing tremendously anyway – we had seven junior members at the start of the year and now we have 21.

"We work with local schools and every Saturday there are beginners' clinics. We've grown their skills and some of those who came through the clinics are now members."

There is an embracing approach at Tudor Park, without question, but the intention is to seriously improve people's game.

A range of events with a lighter side has been scheduled for the summer, however. For example, next month will see a match between former Kent professional footballers and their Essex counterparts. It is hoped that Neil Ruddock and Teddy Sheringham will be among those involved.

A similar event involving former cricketers is planned, as is a more corporate affair where amateur golfers will play alongside ex-footballers.

So why the big push?

"In business in general you have to look at the long-term growth of what you're doing," said Liston. "Golf is an ageing game – that's one of the biggest challenges."

That might surprise some when it's considered how the sport has so often been portrayed as almost critical to those attempting to scale the greasy pole to business success – and that's before the potential social benefits are taken into account.

However, Liston, 33, pointed out that the majority of members at many clubs are either retired or have brought up their children and now have the time to take on a hobby or sport.

"Also, the recession meant that leisure has been hit," he said. "It's at such times that it's regarded as a want rather than a need.

"There was a rise in the number of courses being developed before the recession, but after it there has been a decreasing number of rounds.

"We had simply got to the stage



JOIN US: Youngsters learn the game (top); the Tudor Park team (above left); Fraser Liston eyes a shot (above right)

and beginner alike

of golf and introduce more people than ever to its delights

where there were too many facilities across the country.

"The popularity of Tiger Woods brought more young people in, but we have to keep momentum going."

It's easy enough to picture young people out on the course and, similarly, women, but it's perhaps the idea of golf as a family game that doesn't sit so readily with our conceptions.

"We're keen to get all the family playing," said Liston. "It's important to stress that it's not intimidating here at all – it's open and modern and there aren't strict rules on things like jeans or wearing your socks to a certain level."

"It's still an elitist sport in a lot of ways. If you have to pay £100-£200 for a round in some places, it's obviously aimed at a certain type of individual."

There are no such concerns at Tudor Park, a point that will be highlighted at its Family Golf Festival this month.

It is free to attend and families can just turn up on the day, during which they will get a close-up look at facili-

“ It's been described as car-crash golf and it's the second-most-viewed golf event on Sky Sports. It gives amateurs the chance to feel professional. ”

Fraser Liston,
on the William Hunt Trilby Tour

ties, free tuition and the chance to hit some balls, but by confirming in advance they can secure their own slot.

At the sharper end of the things, meanwhile, on Thursday, August 7, Tudor Park hosts the Kent Championship section of the William Hunt Trilby Tour. The winner, and newly-crowned holder of the Kent Championship title, will be joined at the grand

final of the tour at St Pierre, Chesham, by those finishing in the nine places below him (or her!) on the day.

Before then, there are two final qualifier days, on Saturday, July 26, and Wednesday, August 6. There is still time to enter, but Liston warns: "It's been described as car-crash golf and it's the second-most-viewed golf event on Sky Sports."

"It gives amateurs the chance to feel like professionals as the whole set-up is developed that way, with cameras, advertising hoardings and so on. And they get to wear a Trilby!"

However strong your nerve, whatever your desires from the game, however, the good folk of Tudor Park are keen to ensure that your love of the glorious game of golf can only grow. This could be your time.

■ **To book a place on the Family Golf Festival, on Sunday, June 22, phone 01622 739412.**

To take part in a Trilby Tour qualifier, phone the same number or visit www.marriottgolf.co.uk/trilbytour.

NTW

Lawrence has shot at title in Alexandra Palace challenge

MAIDSTONE light-middleweight boxer Oliver Lawrence bids to become a national champion at London's Alexandra Palace next month.

The unbeaten 21-year-old will meet Bourne-mouth's Amir Saghalati on Saturday, July 12, in his challenge for the Queensbury national light-middleweight title at the historic venue.

The competition is televised and Lawrence could become one of the show's biggest stars if he can emerge with the victory.

"This is 100 per cent the biggest fight of my life at an amazing venue," he said.

The Maidstone stylist has featured twice on Sky Sports, with impressive wins over Joey Pirotta and Darryl Davidson earning him a crack at the belt.

To find out more on the upcoming bout, visit www.queensburyboxing.co.uk.



FIGHT: Oliver Lawrence



DELIGHT: Gills boss Peter Taylor

Gillingham sign Loft from Vale

GILLINGHAM have signed midfielder Doug Loft from Port Vale on a two-year contract.

Loft, 27, turned down a new deal at Port Vale and passed a medical on Tuesday afternoon before agreeing the move to Priestfield.

He was a first-team regular at Vale Park, making 197 appearances in five years. He scored 19 goals in all competitions, including nine last season.

He was voted the club's Player of the Year at the end of the 2011-12 season, when the club finished 12th in League Two.

Gillingham manager Peter Taylor said: "I'm very pleased – he's a player I have looked at for a very long time."

The next great tennis weekend

FAMILIES across Kent can get involved in the excitement and build-up to Wimbledon when the second in a series of four free Great British Tennis Weekends smashes into town next weekend (Saturday and Sunday, June 21-22).

For more details, visit www.greatbritishtennisweekend.com.

Edwards is top woman of year

KENT player Charlotte Edwards has been named as England Women's cricketer of the year for 2013-14.

Edwards captained the England side to successive Ashes wins against Australia and won the prestigious vote from the ECB (England and Wales Cricket Board).

Jackson strikes as England progress

KENT player Ashley Jackson scored for England as they reached the semi-finals of the Hockey World Cup with a thrilling 3-2 win over Belgium on Monday.

England were due to play The Netherlands in the semi-final on Friday.

Jackson plays for East Grinstead.

Sloppy fielding costs Kent in T20 Blast

DROPPED catches cost Kent in their T20 Blast match against Essex at Canterbury on Wednesday.

Having compiled 189-5 from their 20 overs, Kent were consigned to a

six-wicket defeat largely through the efforts of Ravi Bopare (81 not out) and captain Ryan ten Doeschate (47).

Bopare was dropped once and ten Doeschate twice as Essex eased home.

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